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AUSCHWITZ: CREMATORIUM I

AND THE ALLEGED HOMICIDAL GASSINGS

The morgue of the old crematorium in the Auschwitz concentration camp is said to have been the first location where mass gassings of Jews occurred over an extended period of time. In this study, Italian scholar and prolific Revisionist author Carlo Mattogno analyzes the most important witness testimonies and juxtaposes them with original German wartime documents as well as material evidence still available today. Mattogno shows that the witness testimonies are either extremely vague or, where they are specific, that they contradict each other or claim physical impossibilities. A few witnesses made more specific statements, which allow for their verification or refutation. Mattogno performs an analysis of these statements with the help of both original German wartime documents and material evidence. His analysis reveals that the claims of these witnesses are totally unfounded. Mattogno also exposes the fraudulent attempts of mainstream historians to convert the witnesses' black propaganda into "truth" by means of selective quotes, omissions and distortions. Finally, Mattogno shows with forensic methods—by investigating the current state of the structure as presented to tourists today—that this crematory's morgue has never been anything different than what it was meant to be: a morgue. Softcover, 138 pages, #546, **\$18**. Available from TBR Book Club. See inside for ordering form or call TBR toll free at 1-877-773-9077 to charge to major credit cards.

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CARLO MATTOGNO

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BY CARLO MATTOGNO

PUBLISHED BY THE BARNES REVIEW

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Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings

By CARLO MATTOGNO

Translated by HENRY GARDNER

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Introduction

The official history of the plan for the extermination of the Jews that was allegedly implemented at Auschwitz between 1942 and 1944 begins, as is well known, with an impalpable event: the first homicidal gassing in the basement of block 11 of Auschwitz. This deed is said to have taken place between September 3 and 5, 1941, and to have led to the death of 250 sick detainees and 600 Soviet prisoners of war. I dedicated an in-depth study to this alleged event in 1992¹ – recently published in English² and German³ in a revised, corrected, and enlarged edition – in which I demonstrated that this event has no historical foundation.

Official historiography affirms that, because the basement of block 11 caused too much time to be lost in ventilation, the homicidal gassings were subsequently moved to the morgue (*Leichenhalle*) of crematorium I, the old crematorium (*altes Krematorium*) at Auschwitz, and that this space was then equipped with a ventilation device to make it suitable for such a purpose. There is, however, no trace in the documents of any such criminal use of this hall.

Initially at least, the homicidal activity, which allegedly went on in this morgue, is said to have been of an experimental nature aiming at a refinement of the method used. As in the case of the “first gassing,” this activity rests entirely on testimony. In view of the total absence of documentary confirmation, this alleged milestone of the official history of the camp was for decades relegated to the murky sidelines of historical research, generally dealt with in a few pages, if not a few lines of text.

In the present study, which is the logical sequel to *Auschwitz: The First Gassing*, I shall examine the topic of the alleged gassings in the morgue of crematorium I from three converging viewpoints: the origin of the account and its development in the testimonies; the ventilation projects for crematorium I and their implementation; and the material and documentary evidence.

The conclusions of this three-pronged approach, as we shall see in the chapters that follow, squarely contradict the assertions of official historiography and lay bare the true nature of their shaky conjectures, which have no objective backing.

¹ C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: la prima gasazione*. Edizioni di Ar, Padua, 1992.

² C. Mattogno, *Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005.

³ *Auschwitz: Die erste Vergasung. Gerücht und Wirklichkeit*, Castle Hill Publishers, in preparation.

Chapter I:

The Origin of the Homicidal Gassing Story

1. The “Gas Chamber” of Crematorium I in the Reports from the Secret Resistance Movement at Auschwitz

From April 1941 onwards, various resistance groups that had sprung up among the detainees regularly sent out detailed reports on the events in the camp, which were then collected and disseminated by the Polish government in exile in London. These reports, published by the Auschwitz Museum as a book of nearly 200 pages,⁴ refer several times to rumors relating to the first alleged gassing in the basement of block 11 – which, however, is never mentioned⁵ – as well as to the alleged homicidal activity in the two provisional gas chambers at Birkenau – likewise never referred to by that name.⁶ On the other hand, these reports are practically silent about homicidal gasings, which allegedly went on for a good 14 months in the morgue of crematorium I.

The crematorium of the Auschwitz camp comes up for the first time in a report dated June 1942, which merely states:⁷

“The bodies of those who die in the camp are taken to the crematorium, which can burn only 200 persons [corpses] per day, the remainder are taken to Brzezinka [Birkenau] and buried in graves dug for that purpose. The corpses of those who have been gassed are also buried there.”

The next reference to the crematorium is contained in a “letter written from the Auschwitz camp” dated August 29, 1942:⁸

“Every day, two fully loaded carts, which contain some 150 persons [corpses], go to the crematorium, which has been enlarged and remodeled to absorb 200 persons [corpses] in 24 hours.”

The “Memorandum on the situation in the country for the period of October 11 through November 15, 1942” gives the following information:⁹

“The official book of the detainees who have been burnt so far in the crematoria^[10] of Auschwitz lists as of August 15 some 18,800^[11] surnames

⁴ “Obóz koncentracyjny Oświęcim w świetle akt Delegatury Rządu R.P. na Kraj” (The Auschwitz Concentration Camp in the Light of the Proceedings of the Delegatura of the Polish Government in Exile), *Zeszyty oświęcimskie*, special no. I, Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu, 1968.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 11, 15, 16, 52, 67. Cf. C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 31-36.

⁶ Cf. in this respect my study *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black Propaganda versus History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005.

⁷ “Obóz koncentracyjny...,” op. cit. (note 4), p. 34. The last sentence refers to the alleged temporary gas chambers of Birkenau.

⁸ Ibid., p. 42.

⁹ “Obóz koncentracyjny...,” op. cit. (note 4), p. 56. The report is dated November 15, 1942.

of martyrs for this camp. Not mentioned in this book are the tens of thousands who are sent to Auschwitz merely for the purpose of being exterminated there immediately in the gas chambers."¹²

The only reference to the alleged gas chamber in crematorium I appears in a report of November 1942:¹³

"There are two poisoning sites: in the camp crematorium (capacity 400 persons) and at Brzezinka [Birkenau], where several considerably larger houses near the forest have been converted for this purpose."

Surprisingly, for the 14 months of the operation of the "gas chamber" in crematorium I, where several tens of thousands of people are said to have perished, no detainee in the camp noted anything, and the "truth" was discovered by the resistance movement of the camp only a few weeks before such activity allegedly ended!

2. Origin and Development of the Official Version

Between February 14 and March 8, 1945, an investigative Commission consisting of the Poles R. Dawidowski and J. Doliński and the Soviet citizens V.F. Lavrushin and A.M. Schuer drew up a report on the "gas chambers" and the crematoria of Auschwitz-Birkenau, which contains the following passage on crematorium I:¹⁴

"In early 1941, a crematorium, designated as crematorium #1, was started up in the Auschwitz camp. It had two ovens with two muffles [each], heated by four coke gasifiers. At the end of 1941, in September or October,^[15] a third oven with 2 muffles of the same type as the first two was set up in the same place [the oven room]. Each muffle could accomodate 3 to 5 corpses at one time, cremation lasted one hour and a half, and the number of corpses cremated amounted to 300 to 350 per day. Next to this crematorium there was a gas chamber, which had, at either end, gas-tight doors with peep-holes and in the ceiling four openings with hermetic closures through which the 'Ziklon' for the killing of the persons was thrown. Crematorium I functioned until March 1943 and existed in that form for two years."

On the basis of rather fanciful assumptions (an operational period of 14 months, an activity coefficient of 0.5 and a monthly capacity of 9,000 corpses), the experts then calculated a total of 63,000 corpses as having been

¹⁰ "w krematoriach;" as is well known, at that time there existed only one crematorium, the one at the main camp (*Stammlager*).

¹¹ The accuracy of this figure cannot be verified, because the registers of the cremations have not been preserved.

¹² "w komorach gazowych"

¹³ "Obóz koncentracyjny...", op. cit. (note 4), p. 69.

¹⁴ GARF, 7021-108-15, pp. 2f. This report exists in a number of copies.

¹⁵ The date is in error, Cf. chapter V.3.

cremated,¹⁶ but did not specify whether these were victims of the alleged gas chamber.

The description was very terse, because the Soviets had not yet found either witnesses or documents regarding the homicidal use of the crematorium. The latter was obviously assumed on account of the three gas-tight doors (*Gasschutztüren*), which, as we shall see in chapter VI, had been installed in late 1944, when the crematorium was converted to an “air-raid shelter for the SS hospital with operating room” (*Luftschutzbunker für SS-Revier mit einem Operationsraum*). This is confirmed by the fact that, in its original state, the morgue did in fact have two doors, but not “at either end.” That was the case in the February to March 1945 period.

The serious gaps of the Soviet Commission were only partially filled a few months later by a Polish detainee, Stanisław Jankowski.¹⁷ He created the literary fetus of the story of the gassings in crematorium I, which, however, went nearly unnoticed by interrogators and historians alike.

On September 26, 1946, at the request of Jan Sehn, the investigating judge in the trial of Rudolf Höss (March 11-29, 1947) and that of the Auschwitz camp garrison (November 25 to December 16, 1947), the engineer Roman Dawidowski drew up a lengthy technical opinion on the alleged extermination installations at Auschwitz-Birkenau. On the subject of criminal activity in crematorium I, this expert wrote:¹⁸

“One now began to poison people regularly with Zyklon B and to use for that purpose the Leichenhalle (morgue) of crematorium I (photograph 18).^[19] This chamber had a floor area of 65 square meters – 17 by 4.5 meters^[20] – and on both sides had a gas-tight door. Gassing took place by dumping the contents of Zyklon cans through openings in the ceiling.”

The opinion states that from March 1942 onwards thousands of Jews arrived at Auschwitz every day and that “the gas chamber of crematorium I turned out to be inadequate for their liquidation.” The alleged gassings were, therefore, moved to the so-called “Bunkers” of Birkenau.

Toward the end of 1946, Jan Sehn summarized the results of this research in a long article entitled “The Auschwitz Concentration and Extermination Camp.”²¹ In the chapter on the “gas chambers” he simply included the corresponding passage from Roman Dawidowski’s opinion, including the error in the calculation, and adding the mistake of the Soviet experts with respect to the position of the gas-tight doors.²²

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁷ Cf. below, chapter III.

¹⁸ AGK, NTN, 93; Höss trial, vol. 11, pp. 26f.

¹⁹ This concerns the plan of crematorium I, Topf D 59042, of September 25, 1941. Cf. document 3 in the appendix.

²⁰ Computational error: $17 \times 4.5 = 76.5$. The morgue measured $17 \times 4.6 = 78.2$ m².

²¹ Jan Sehn, “Obóz koncentracyjny i zagłady Oświęcim,” in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, vol. I, Poznań 1946, pp. 63-130.

²² Ibid., p. 121.

“Further gassings now took place in the gas chamber of crematorium I. This chamber had a floor area of 65 square meters and a gas-tight door at either end. Gassing was effected by dumping through openings in the ceiling the contents of the cans, which gave off the toxic gas. From that time on, gassing of persons increased systematically.”

Also in 1946, Filip Friedman, director of the “Jewish Historical Commission in Poland,” published a book on Auschwitz, “compiled from official records and evidence and eyewitness accounts,” in which he writes the following:²³

“The same year [1941] permanent gas installations were put into two peasant huts at Brzezinki (Birkenau). The bodies of the gassed people were buried near the huts. By the spring of 1942, the bodies began to rot and smell, and steps were taken to build a crematorium in which to burn the corpses. This was the origin of the first small crematorium with a gas chamber at Oswiecim. It was, however, still only an improvisation on a small scale.”

Thus, inverting the actual sequence of events according to official historiography, he has the so-called “Bunkers” at Birkenau come into being in 1941²⁴ and makes the installation of crematorium I a subsequent event.

The sentence in the Höss trial (April 2, 1947) devotes less than one line to the problem of alleged homicidal gassings in crematorium I:²⁵

“Gassings of detainees were undertaken within the camp from 1941, initially in the basement of block 11, later in the morgue of crematorium I [...].”

The indictment in the trial of the Auschwitz camp garrison (November 1947) was, in this regard, just as laconic:²⁶

“Then the gassings took place in a special chamber in crematorium I, and later also in the so-called Bunkers 1 and 2 at Birkenau in farmhouses, whose inhabitants had been removed.”

In 1949, Bruno Baum, an ex-detainee of Auschwitz who had organized the German resistance group, published a book specifically dedicated to the camp resistance. He was, it would thus seem, one of the most highly qualified persons to speak on this subject, but still, regarding the alleged gassings in crematorium I, he had nothing better to say than the few lines that follow:²⁷

“One day, the news spread that in the old crematorium of the main camp they had tried to kill detainees by means of gas. This information was soon confirmed.”

And that is all.

²³ F. Friedman, *This Was Oswiecim. The History of a Murder Camp*, The United Jewish Relief Appeal, London 1946, pp. 18f.

²⁴ According to the official history, “Bunker 1” went into service in March or May 1942, “Bunker 2” in June 1942.

²⁵ AGK, NTN, 146z, p. 31.

²⁶ RGVA, 7021-108-39, p. 37.

²⁷ B. Baum, *Widerstand in Auschwitz. Bericht der internationalen antifaschistischen Lagerleitung*, VVN-Verlag, Berlin-Potsdam 1949, p. 11.

After 1956, when the Central Commission for the Investigation into the Hitlerian Crimes in Poland published a Polish-language edition of the so-called memoirs of Rudolf Höss,²⁸ the typical void surrounding the gassings in crematorium I was enriched by the corresponding “testimony” of the Auschwitz commandant. Together with the “report” by Pery Broad – drawn up on July 13, 1945, then lost, later miraculously rediscovered for the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial (December 20, 1963, to August 20, 1965), but not in its original form, of which no one knows the whereabouts – the Höss paper became the keystone of the evidence concerning the homicidal gassings in crematorium I and would invariably be referred to in the official literature.

The year 1958 saw the publication of the German version of a book written by Ota Kraus and Erich Kulka, which had first been published in 1946. It claimed to be a detailed history of the Auschwitz camp, entitled *The Factory of Death* (*Die Todesfabrik*). In the chapter dealing with “the first gassing experiments” (*die ersten Vergasungsversuche*), the authors make the following rather terse remarks:²⁹

“The first mass gassings of transports at Auschwitz took place in early 1942 in the only crematorium then available at the Auschwitz I concentration camp. Prior to that, physically weak detainees, mainly Russian POWs, had been killed in smaller groups by means of gas. The Auschwitz crematorium was small. It had a gas chamber for 600 to 800 persons and six ovens for cremation. A further victim of mass execution was the transport of Slovak Jews from Zilina in May 1942. This gassing was not yet carried out in such a refined fashion as was the case a few days later, after Himmler’s visit. Once the first test had been successful, they started building four large crematoria with gas chambers at Birkenau.”

Otherwise, Kraus and Kulka relied on Höss’ declarations.³⁰ The alleged gassing of the Slovak transport had been taken from a statement by Filip Müller.³¹ The errors in the interpretation (the reason for building the Birkenau crematoria) and in the sequence of events (Himmler’s visit took place in July 1942, not in May) reflect the uncertainty of the historical knowledge at the time.

Even in the 1960s, Jan Sehn, in his book on Auschwitz, deals with the question of the alleged gas chamber of crematorium I in only a couple of lines, the same as those of his 1946 article:³²

“The mortuary (Leichenkeller)^[33] of the first Oswiecim crematorium – used for gassing after the first test in Block 11 – was 65 sq. m. in area and was fitted with two gas-proof doors. Cyclon was infused through openings

²⁸ Central Commission for the Investigation into the Hitlerian Crimes in Poland (ed.), *Wspomnienia Rudolfa Hössa komendanta obozu oświęcimskiego*, Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warsaw 1956.

²⁹ O. Kraus, E. Kulka, *Die Todesfabrik*, Kongress-Verlag, Berlin 1958, p. 110.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 110f.

³¹ Cf. chapter III below.

³² Jan Sehn, *Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau) Concentration camp*, Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warsaw 1961, p. 125.

³³ Wrong term, properly used for the semi-basement morgues of crematoria II and III at Birkenau.

in the ceiling. From 1942 on, mass drafts of Jews began to arrive at Oswiecim. The crematorium I gas chamber proved inadequate for their liquidation."

In one of the first general accounts of the history of the camp compiled by the Auschwitz Museum, the page Franciszek Piper devoted to crematorium I was based on only one source: the "memoirs" of Rudolf Höss!³⁴

Another testimony considered essential and immediately absorbed by official historiography appeared in 1979: the author, Filip Müller,³⁵ asserted he had worked for 16 months in crematorium I at Auschwitz, from May 1942 until July 1943.³⁶

In 1989, Danuta Czech, in the second German edition of her Auschwitz *Kalendarium*, attempted to historicize the story of gassings in crematorium I at Auschwitz by giving precise indications regarding the beginnings of the alleged homicidal activity. The value of her entries will be examined in chapter IV.

Jean-Claude Pressac was the first scholar to try to bring the vagaries of the accounts surrounding the homicidal gassings in the morgue of crematorium I into a historical framework. In 1989 he devoted a whole chapter of his first book to this question, in which he attempted to demonstrate the historical reality of the homicidal gassings in crematorium I on the basis of mere testimony.³⁷

In his second book, which appeared four years later,³⁸ Pressac pretends – somewhat ambitiously – to furnish documentary evidence for the use of the morgue of crematorium I as a homicidal gas chamber. His theses will be evaluated in depth in chapter V.

The most penetrating – or, more precisely, the least superficial – official study of the alleged homicidal gas chamber of crematorium I at Auschwitz is contained in the section "Krematorium I" of the chapter "The Methods of Annihilation," written by Franciszek Piper, which is part of the most comprehensive work on this camp published by the Auschwitz Museum.³⁹ We are dealing here with a little more than ten pages of text accompanied by four pages of

³⁴ F. Piper, "Extermination," in: *Auschwitz (Oświęcim) Camp hitlerien d'extermination*, Editions Interpress, Warsaw 1978, p. 118.

³⁵ F. Müller, *Sonderbehandlung. Drei Jahre in den Krematorien und Gaskammern von Auschwitz*, Verlag Steinhausen, Munich 1979.

³⁶ Filip Müller's testimony will be examined in chapter III.

³⁷ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*, The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1989. The chapter is on pp. 123-159.

³⁸ J.-C. Pressac, *Les crématoires d'Auschwitz. La machinerie du meurtre de masse*, CNRS Editions, Paris 1993; German: *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz. Die Technik des Massenmordes*, Piper, Munich, Zürich 1994.

³⁹ Wacław Długoborski, Franciszek Piper (eds.), *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Węzłowe zagadnienia z dziejów obozu*. Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka, 1995, vol. III, *Zagłada*, pp. 102-113. English version: *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Central Issues in the History of the Camp*, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum 2000, vol. III, pp. 121-133.

drawings and photographs. Two and a half pages summarizing this section had already appeared in English in 1994.⁴⁰

According to this study, which represents the peak of official historiography on this topic, the gas chamber operated from September 1941 until early December 1943 and was instrumental in the deaths of “several tens of thousands” of Jewish victims.⁴¹

Recently, David Irving discovered the verbatim reports of the interrogations of SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Hans Aumeier by the British authorities after his arrest on June 11, 1945. Aumeier had been assigned to Auschwitz in 1942 and 1943. These documents have been cited by official historians as confirmation – or “converging evidence” – of the reality of homicidal gassings in crematorium I at Auschwitz. I shall deal with this claim in chapter III.

Before any detailed examination of the rare testimonies on the alleged homicidal activities in the morgue of crematorium I can be undertaken, it is indispensable to re-establish the documentary framework of what is historically certain about this installation. Regarding the history of the cremation equipment, I refer the reader to the detailed discussion I have presented elsewhere.⁴² In the chapter that follows, I shall mainly focus on the ventilation devices for the morgue – planned and realized – and on the changes that the crematorium went through in November 1944. On this latter point, I shall also deal in chapter VI with the modifications, to which the crematorium was subjected by the Polish authorities in 1946 and 1947.

⁴⁰ F. Piper, “Crematorium I,” paragraph of paper “Gas Chambers and Crematoria,” in: I. Gutman, M. Berenbaum (eds.), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1994, pp. 158-160.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁴² “The Crematoria Ovens of Auschwitz and Birkenau,” in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of “Truth” and “Memory,”* 2nd ed., Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, pp. 373-412.

Chapter II: Crematorium I at Auschwitz

1. The Projects for the Ventilation System of Crematorium I

The correspondence between the SS-*Neubauleitung* (New Construction Office, later *Bauleitung* = Construction Office, finally *Zentralbauleitung* = Central Construction Office) in Auschwitz and the Erfurt company Topf & Söhne contains many documents concerning the projects for ventilation equipment in crematorium I. The first reference appears in a letter from Topf dated December 9, 1940, on the subject of “ventilation equipment for morgues and dissecting room, our offer 40/1096.” Topf indicates that for the dissecting room 10 changes of air had been provided for, and 20 changes for the “morgue” (*Leichenzelle*). The fresh air for the morgue would be made available by windows or other openings:⁴³

“For the removal of the exhaust air we recommend a brick chimney with a minimum height of 10 m above ground.”

The equipment would be supplied within three months. As an attachment, the letter contained Topf drawing D 57999 showing the positioning of the pipework and of the fan. The corresponding cost estimate (*Kosten-Anschlag*), dated December 9, 1940, and also attached to the letter mentioned, amounted to 1,784 RM. Topf offered a fan, No. 450,⁴⁴ for the extraction of 6,000 cubic meters of air per hour under a total pressure difference of 25 mm of water, driven by a three-phase electric motor of 1.5 horse-power. The exhaust pipe (*Abluft-Rohrleitung*) went from the dissecting room (*Sezierraum*) to the fan installed in the morgue and had a diameter rising from 180 to 450 millimeters (Cf. document 1).

At the time, the L-shaped morgue extended to the rear of oven no. 2, as is clear from drawing 57999 of November 30, 1940, which, however, does not show the ventilation equipment.⁴⁵ The latter was probably laid out as shown in J.-C. Pressac’s drawing:⁴⁶ the chimney was to go up along the wall, which separated the morgue from the coke storage room, with the fan being mounted in front of it and the pipes from the dissecting room and the morgue running along the side-walls of the crematorium. Pressac’s drawing contains, however,

⁴³ RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 136f.; “Für die Abführung der Abluft empfehlen wir einen gemauerten Kamin mit einer Mindesthöhe von 10 m über Erdoberfläche.”

⁴⁴ The figure indicated the diameter (in millimeters) of the duct linked to the blower.

⁴⁵ Cf. document 1.

⁴⁶ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 17. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, Robert J. van Pelt, “The Machinery of Mass Murder at Auschwitz,” in I. Gutman, M. Berenbaum (eds.), op. cit. (note 40), p. 194.

a serious error in the sense that he misinterprets the Topf letter of December 9, 1940, “a 10-fold [...] and 20-fold exchange of air,” i.e., 10 changes of air per hour for the dissecting room and 20 changes of air per hour for the “morgue.” Instead, Pressac reads “10 air-intake ports”⁴⁷ for the former and “20 air-intake ports” for the latter, which he has painstakingly added to the pipework in his drawing!

On January 21, 1941, head of construction August Schlachter informed Topf of certain changes in the crematorium building:⁴⁸

“On account of the creation of an urn storage room, the morgue changes its layout, as shown in blue in the drawing. The fan with its motor is to be placed in the urn room. The creation of the urn room leads to the change in the design of the air suction equipment. Moreover, it is desired to attach the oven hall to the ventilation equipment.”

On February 3, 1941, Topf drew up another cost estimate for “1 ventilation system for corpse and dissecting room, 1 ventilation system for furnace room” for a total cost of 2,486 RM. The equipment for the dissecting room and the morgue was the same as before. In addition, there was a blower No. 300 of 3,000 cubic meters per hour under a pressure of 15 mm of water, driven by a 0.75 HP three-phase electric motor, for the furnace hall. The corresponding ducts started out in the center of the hall and had a section increasing from 255 to 300 millimeters.⁴⁹ The design probably corresponded to J.-C. Pressac’s drawing:⁵⁰ the two blowers stood in the urn room and were connected to a brick chimney rising from this room.

On February 15, 1941, Schlachter informed Topf that he did not want a ventilation chimney. The design would have to be changed with the exhaust air now feeding into the existing chimney.⁵¹

Topf worked out a third estimate, in accordance with the wishes of the SS-*Neubauleitung*, dated February 24, 1941.⁵² The design is shown in drawing D 58052 of the same date.⁵³ The equipment consisted of a blower No. 550 – with a capacity of 8,600 cubic meters per hour driven by a three-phase electric motor of 3 HP – placed to the right of the chimney. The duct of 550 mm at the entrance to the crematorium split into three smaller branches, which went to the dissecting room, the furnace hall, and the morgue. Total cost was 1,884

⁴⁷ In the original: “dix et vingt prises d’air.” J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 18. In “The Machinery of Mass Murder at Auschwitz,” (note 46), this passage is missing, but the mistake appears in the legend of the corresponding drawing, which speaks of “10 air exchangers” and “20 air exchangers” (p. 194).

⁴⁸ RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 185.

⁴⁹ “1 Entlüftungs-Anlage für Leichen- und Sezier-Raum, 1 Entlüftungs-Anlage für Ofen-Raum,” RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 123-126. Cf. document 7.

⁵⁰ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 19. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 195. In this drawing, the ventilation duct of the morgue runs along the opposite wall as compared to the first drawing and is thus shorter. Pressac has probably noticed that the price for the duct in the first cost estimate was 924 RM, as against 867 RM in the second one, and may have deduced from this a shorter length of the duct.

⁵¹ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 121.

⁵² RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 195-197. Cf. document 8.

⁵³ “Entlüftungsanlage,” RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 191f. Cf. document 2.

RM plus 596 RM for the installation. Delivery was to be 6 months. On March 15, 1941, the SS-*Neubauleitung* placed the order based on the estimate of February 24, and on March 24 Topf officially confirmed it.⁵⁴

However, at the end of February, since the entire project was late, Schlachter had a temporary ventilation system installed in the crematorium. In his "activity report" of March 1, 1941, for the period of February 23 to March 1, 1941, he wrote:⁵⁵

"in the crematorium, the work on the new incineration plant has been terminated, a temporary ventilation has been connected to the exhaust channel, and everything has been overhauled."

The "exhaust channel" (*Abzugskanal*) was the flue of the first crematorium oven.

On June 7, 1941, SS-*Untersturmführer* Maximilian Grabner, head of the Auschwitz Political Department, wrote the following letter to SS-*Neubauleitung*:⁵⁶

"It is absolutely necessary to install a separate ventilation in the morgue of the crematorium. The existing ventilation has been rendered useless by the installation of the second oven. When the second oven is in use – and that is now the case almost daily – the ventilation duct to the morgue has to be closed because warm air otherwise enters the morgue, causing the exact opposite of a ventilation."

The deficiencies of the ventilation and of the fresh air feed are particularly noticeable under the prevailing conditions of warm weather. It is hardly possible to spend any time in the morgue, even if such instances are generally of short duration.

A proper ventilation will surely lead to an improvement in the quality of the air and to a reduction of the humidity of the room. It would also do away with the presence of flies in the morgue or at least reduce this nuisance to a minimum. The elimination of such deficiencies is in the general interest, not least because it would put a stop to the spread of disease by the flies.

It is therefore requested that two ventilators be installed in the morgue, one for aeration and one for ventilation. A separate duct leading to the chimney must be provided for the ventilation. It is requested that the work be started as soon as possible."

The temporary ventilation of the morgue had been installed during the construction of the second crematorium furnace by connecting its left-side flue – which ran along the partition between the furnace hall and the morgue – to the latter room.⁵⁷ The system functioned in a way that depended upon the draft of

⁵⁴ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 118.

⁵⁵ "Im Krematorium wurden die Arbeiten für die neue Verbrennungsanlage fertiggestellt, eine provisorische Entlüftung an den Abzugskanal angeschlossen und alles instandgesetzt," RGVA, 502-1-214, p. 67.

⁵⁶ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 111. Cf. document 9.

⁵⁷ Cf. documents 10 and 11.

the chimney, which, by lowering the pressure in the flue, also sucked in air from the morgue.

The system worked well only when exclusively the first oven was in operation, the two flues⁵⁸ of which were far enough away from the ventilation duct of the morgue.⁵⁹ When, however, the second oven came into regular use – “almost daily,” says Grabner – the hot gases from the muffle on the left, on entering the respective flue, immediately reached the ventilation duct. If the flap of that duct was open, a portion of the gases entered the morgue, warming it up.

Grabner hence requests the installation of two blowers in the morgue, one for fresh air, one for the exhaust air, and the construction of a separate conduit to the chimney. The term used – “*Fuchs*” – designates the flue between the furnace and the chimney, because Grabner was aiming for a brick duct that would pass under the floor of the furnace hall.

Between the end of September and the middle of October 1941, ventilation work, which certainly stemmed from Grabner’s complaints, was carried out in the crematorium. A “work sheet” of the inmate locksmith shop dated September 25, 1941, mentions the following order: “Make 4 air-tight flaps.” The work was done the same day by the detainees Zalewski (8363), Morgiel (7868), and Dudziński (16197), blacksmiths, and Bialas (1461), welder, in a total of 11 man-hours. As is noted on the back of the sheet, the 4 flaps were done in black plate (*Schwarzblech*).⁶⁰

Another work sheet of the inmate locksmith shop for the crematorium, established October 7, 1941,⁶¹ refers to “fabrication of 2 ventilation caps in steel plate with an internal space of 27/27 cm, otherwise according to instructions.” The work was done by the detainee welder Bialas and the detainee plumbers Maliszewski (9612) and Dyntar (1409) in a total of 50 man-hours between October 7 and 13, 1941. For the fabrication of these devices, 4 square meters of black plate were used.⁶²

The “air-tight flaps” were the air-tight closures, which served to block off the ducts of a room from the system of ventilation. The “ventilation caps” were probably vertical tubes with caps for ventilation, similar to those (in brickwork), which were erected on the roof of the crematorium above the two furnaces for the ventilation of the oven room.

The “Inventory map of building No. 47a, BW 11, crematorium” drawn on April 10, 1942, by detainee 20033 (the Polish engineer Stefan Swiszcowski),

⁵⁸ Each muffle of the two ovens had a lateral flue linking up with the main flue, which ran below the paved floor in front of the ovens up to the chimney, as illustrated in document 10.

⁵⁹ In the beginning, the second oven was not often used, either because it still had to dry out, or because in early April draft problems became apparent. On April 2, 1941, Schlachter sent Topf a telegram and a letter to inform them that “the 2nd oven unit has too little draft, which prevents the cremation from being carried out to completion” (“*die 2. Ofenanlage zu wenig Zug hat, sodass die Verbrennung nicht vollkommen durchgeführt werden kann*”); RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 113. Topf gave instructions to SS-Neubauleitung on how to solve the problem in a letter which bears the same date; RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 115f.

⁶⁰ RGVA, 502-2-1, pp. 74-74a. Cf. document 12

⁶¹ The date refers to the receipt of the order.

⁶² RGVA, 502-2-1, pp. 75-75a. Cf. document 13.

shows in its view of the chimney on the flat roof, to the left, a fat angled tube, which probably housed an intake fan (*Belüftung*).⁶³ It could not have been an exhaust fan (*Entlüftung*) or a duct for exhaust air for two reasons: first of all, for the evacuation of the waste air from the morgue Topf had proposed a chimney 10 meters high, whereas the SS-*Neubauleitung*, for reasons of economy, had opted for the use of the existing chimney. Both Topf and SS-*Neubauleitung* were in agreement that the air removed from an ordinary morgue would have to be discharged at least 10 meters above ground. In that case, how could SS-*Neubauleitung* have decided to discharge not only the waste air from the morgue but even the lethal exhaust from the alleged homicidal gas chamber through a duct no more than 5 feet high?

Secondly, blowing out the waste air through the duct in question would have necessitated opening one or both doors of the morgue – not a good solution hygienically for an ordinary morgue, and highly dangerous for a homicidal gas chamber. Hence, if an intake fan had been housed in that duct, the ventilation of the morgue could only have been of the type requested by Grabner. The ventilation system of the morgue was connected, through a metal duct, to the air conduit that passed under the floor of the furnace room and went to the chimney. Upstream of the juncture with the chimney there was an exhaust fan. Such an arrangement, however, could have only functioned up to the beginning of July 1942, when the old chimney of the crematorium was demolished. No air conduit was, in fact, attached to the new chimney, as is evident from the corresponding design drawing done by the Köhler company on August 11, 1942.⁶⁴

The ventilation equipment Topf had supplied in 1941 on the basis of the estimate submitted on February 24, 1941, thus rusted away unused in a warehouse.

On October 28, 1942, Topf sent the Central Construction Office at Auschwitz drawing D 58052, which they had already dispatched to SS-*Neubauleitung* on February 24, 1941, with the following comment:⁶⁵

"We also attach drawing D 58052 for the ventilation system still to be installed in the oven plant of the old crematorium I Kl. that we supplied years ago."

On November 27, 1942, SS-*Untersturmführer* Fritz Wolter wrote a memo concerning "Ventilations for crematoria" (*Entlüftungen für Krematorien*):⁶⁶

"On November 27, 1942, the undersigned had a telephone conversation with engineer Prüfer of Topf & Sohn, Erfurt. The company would have a fitter available in a week's time. He would set up the ventilation plant, if the roofs of the special cellars are ready, also the forced draft for the five

⁶³ "Bestandplan des Gebäudes Nr. 47a B.W. 11, Krematorium," RGVA, 502-2-146, p. 21. Cf. document 4.

⁶⁴ "Rauchkanal für die Zentral-Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz O.S.," RGVA, 502-2-23, p. 18.

⁶⁵ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 96.

⁶⁶ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 65.

3-muffle ovens. At the same time, the ventilation equipment could be installed in the old crematorium.”

A postscript specifies that, after discussion with SS-Untersturmführer Janisch, the Topf fitter could start the job in three weeks' time.

On November 30, Topf, referring to “Crematorium,^[67] aeration and ventilation system,” inquired about the urgency of the matter.⁶⁸ Bischoff, head of Central Construction Office and SS-Hauptsturmführer, advised Topf the same day as follows:⁶⁹

“The fitter you offered can start immediately with the installation of the ventilation system in the old crematorium at Auschwitz concentration camp. After completion of this job, the forced draft system for crematorium I [= II] (five 3-muffle ovens) in the POW camp can be installed.”

As the last point, Bischoff then requested the ventilation system for crematorium II to be installed.

In a list of invoices, which Central Construction Office had not yet paid, there is also an invoice concerning the ventilation equipment of crematorium I in an amount of 1,884 RM,⁷⁰ based on the cost estimate of February 24, 1941. The equipment had, therefore, been shipped by Topf, but there is no document proving that it was actually installed in the old crematorium as “immediately” requested by Bischoff.

The crematorium almost certainly stopped its activity on July 17, 1943, as shown by a letter written the previous day by Bischoff to the head of SS garrison administration, SS-Sturmbannführer Möckel, on the need to take the plant out of service because of the danger of fire it posed to the two wooden barracks of the Political Department constructed next to it.⁷¹

2. The Transformation of Crematorium I into an Air-Raid Shelter

On November 16, 1943, the commander of the Auschwitz camp, SS-Obersturmbannführer Liebehenschel, issued the following order regarding “Air-raid measures at garrison Auschwitz”:⁷²

“Upon advice of the competent superior authorities, the necessary air-raid protection measures will now also be undertaken in the Auschwitz garrison area with immediate effect. In my quality as competent local air-raid protection officer I have appointed SS-Untersturmführer Josten to be my permanent representative. I request all services to support SS-Untersturmführer Josten in every possible way.”

⁶⁷ It concerned the future crematorium II of the Birkenau camp.

⁶⁸ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 62.

⁶⁹ RGVA, 502-1-314, p. 17.

⁷⁰ “43/314 Entlüftungs-Anlage für Krem. I, Rechnung v. 27.5.43,” RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 26.

⁷¹ RGVA, 502-1-324, p. 1.

⁷² Standortbefehl Nr. 51/43 of November 16, 1943. GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 73.

The order became effective as of January 1, 1944.⁷³ According to the usual practice, a construction site was defined for this purpose: BW 98, “air-raid shelter trench,” into which all such shelters planned or eventually built at Auschwitz were integrated. They became sections of BW 98 and carried the same designation, with an added letter. For example, the air-raid shelter of the camp commander’s residence became BW 98J. The old crematorium at Auschwitz also became part of this system of air-raid protection measures.

On July 16, 1944, during his visit to Auschwitz, SS-*Obergruppenführer* Pohl approved the “Installation of a gas-proof operating room and fragment-proof shelter in the former crematorium for the garrison surgeon,” which became BW 98M.⁷⁴

On August 26, 1944, Josten, who had meanwhile been promoted to SS-*Obersturmführer* and appointed “head of air-raid protection,” wrote a letter to the camp commander on “conversion of the old crematorium for air-raid protection purposes,” which reads as follows:⁷⁵

“In the attachment I submit a project for the conversion of the old crematorium for air-raid protection purposes with the request for approval of this transformation.

1. Work scheduled:

Dismantling of the old muffle ovens, including recovery and cleaning of the corresponding bricks.

Filling in of heating shafts and conduits with the rubble and waste resulting from the dismantling of the muffle ovens.

Installation of gas protection doors, window shutters, and windows, creation of wall openings and ducts needed for heating ovens, aeration and ventilation,

plumbing and drainage work,

re-arrangement of existing electrical wiring in accordance with floor plan,

improvement of floors and partial installation of wooden floor,

improvement of roof and painting of same with bitumen.

2. Materials needed:

500 kg of cement

400 kg of bricks

20 kg of steel rods

50 m of railway rails

24 pcs. timber, 4.80 m long, 10/15 cm

10 pcs. timber, 3.90 m long, 10/15 cm

102 sqm boards, 25 mm

⁷³ Letter of the camp commander SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Liebehenschel in his function of “*Der SS-Standortälteste als örtlicher Luftschutzleiter*” (senior garrison officer as local air-raid protection chief) to Zentralbauleitung of February 17, 1944. RGVA, 502-1-401, p. 100.

⁷⁴ Letter from SS-*Sturmbannführer* Bischoff, Leiter der Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei “Schlesien,” to Zentralbauleitung of October 17, 1944. RGVA, 502-2-147, p. 124.

⁷⁵ RGVA, 502-1-401, p. 34. Cf. document 14.

13 pcs. windows, one-sided, 60 x 80 cm
 2 pcs. doors, one-sided, 70 x 200 cm
 16 pcs. window shutters, gas-tight and fragment-proof
 7 pcs. doors, gas-tight and fragment-proof"

On October 17, SS-Sturmbannführer Bischoff, head of construction inspections of the Waffen-SS and Police Silesia, wrote a letter to the Central Construction Office regarding the start of work, which "due to urgency," could begin immediately without the usual bureaucratic formalities.⁷⁴ The work had, however, already started. A document dated September 4 mentions "Construction of a gas-tight treatment room in the former crema. for the garrison physician," 5 percent of which had been completed.⁷⁶

On November 2, 1944, Jothann drew up an "explanatory report for conversion of the old crematorium into an air-raid shelter for the SS sickbay with an operating room in concentration camp Auschwitz O/S. BW 98M, " in which he described the work to be done:⁷⁷

"Conversion of the existing and available rooms of the old crematorium into an air-raid shelter for the SS sickbay with an operating room. The existing central walls and some partitions will be reinforced to 38 cm. Any other necessary partitions will be built. An emergency operating room, two gas-locks, two flushing toilets^[78] and a water faucet in the operating room are to be installed because a water supply line is available and the sewage line can be extended. Heating will be by ovens."

Regarding the time schedule, Jothann adds:

"On account of its urgency, work has already started and will be completed within three weeks."

On the same day, Jothann also drew up a cost estimate⁷⁹ for a total amount of 4,300 RM, and a location sketch.⁸⁰ The work was completed in the second half of November.

⁷⁶ "Aufstellung der im Bau befindlichen Bauwerke mit Fertigstellungsgrad" (register of building works under construction with degree of completion), drawn up by SS-Obersturmführer Jothann on September 4, 1944. RGVA, 502-1-85, p. 2.

⁷⁷ RGVA, 502-2-147, p. 125.

⁷⁸ These toilets were initially planned as "Trockenklosett" (chemical toilets), see Document 5. The drainage pipes of these toilets can still be seen in the morgue today, see Doc. 35.

⁷⁹ "Kostenüberschlag zum Ausbau des alten Krematoriums als Luftschutzbunker für SS-Revier mit einem Operationsraum im K.L. Auschwitz O/S. BW 98M," RGVA, 502-2-147, pp. 126-126a.

⁸⁰ "Lageskizze für den Ausbau eines Luftschutzbunkers für SS Revier," RGVA, 502-2-147, p. 122.

Chapter III: The Witnesses

In this chapter, we will examine, in chronological order, the declarations of the main witnesses – former detainees and former members of the SS – who have spoken of homicidal gassings in the morgue of crematorium I.

1. Stanisław Jankowski

On April 16, 1945, Stanisław Jankowski, who at that time chose to be called Alter Feinsilber,⁸¹ made a deposition⁸² in the course of the preparation of the trial of Höss, stating among other things that he had been assigned to work in crematorium I in November 1942. This is what he had to say about the morgue:⁸³

"This large hall had no windows, merely two traps in the ceiling and electric lights, as well as a door from the corridor^[84] and a second one leading to the furnace room. This hall was called corpse hall [morgue]. It was used for storing corpses; at the same time, so-called 'rozwalka,' i.e., executions of detainees by shooting, took place there."

Hence, the morgue was not a gas chamber. In fact, he stated specifically:⁸⁵

"I declare that at that time, i.e., in late 1942, there were not yet any gas chambers at Auschwitz. The only gassing action known to me from that period occurred in November or December 1942."

He was referring to the alleged gassing of the 390 members of the first "Sonderkommando."⁸⁵ Danuta Czech, in her entry for that day, states:⁸⁶

"The group of some 300 Jewish detainees who had been assigned to the unearthing and burning operations involving 107,000 corpses buried in mass graves was herded by the SS from Birkenau back to the main camp. There, they were led into the gas chamber at crematorium I and killed with gas. In this way, the witnesses of the incineration of the corpses were removed."

⁸¹ Another spelling of his family name was Fajnzylberg.

⁸² Statement of Stanisław Jankowski (Alter Feinsilber), in: "Inmitten des grauenvollen Verbrechens. Handschriften von Mitgliedern des Sonderkommandos," *Hefte von Auschwitz*, special issue I, Verlag des Staatlichen Auschwitz-Birkenau Museums, 1972, p. 42.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 42f.

⁸⁴ Actually from the corpse washing room (*Waschraum*).

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁸⁶ D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939–1945*, Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbek, Germany 1989, p. 349.

Czech's sources are merely testimonies. They were given, moreover, after Jankowski made his statement. In fact, this alleged gassing lacks even the slightest documentary evidence, and the date of December 3, 1942, was simply invented by Czech on the basis of the above-mentioned declaration by Jankowski. Other than that, there is no document concerning this alleged "Sonderkommando" of 300 or 390 Jewish detainees. The only reference to it by Czech, dated July 4, 1942, is the following:⁸⁷

"The so-called Sonderkommando, consisting of several dozen Jewish detainees, is being formed. They have to dig trenches near the Bunkers and bury the bodies of those killed in the gas chambers. This command is housed in one of the barracks in the men's camp at Birkenau. It is completely isolated from the other detainees."

The source used by Auschwitz Museum researcher Czech is the "Proceedings of the Delegatura of the Polish Government in Exile,"⁸⁷ i.e., the documents published in the work "The Auschwitz Concentration Camp in the Light of the Proceedings of the Delegatura of the Polish Government in Exile" mentioned above.⁴ It states, in fact, in the "Memorandum on the situation in the Country for the period of July 16 to August 25, 1942" that four detainees who had escaped from Auschwitz at the end of June 1942 had, among other things, said the following:⁸⁸

"From each group of new arrivals several groups of ten very strong detainees are selected. They form a special company that digs the graves during the night and buries the dead. This company is held in strict isolation and is exterminated after a while in the gas chamber; its task is taken over by a fresh group."

Danuta Czech's reference to this text is therefore completely fraudulent, either because the report of the four escapees refers to a period prior to the end of June (hence the date of July 4 is wrong) or because at that time the "special company"⁸⁹ already existed.⁹⁰

As far as the content of this report is concerned – it is the first to mention the so-called "Sonderkommando" of Birkenau, which at the time had not yet been subjected to any kind of extermination policy – we may ask how the four escapees had come to know that this unit would, after some time, be exterminated and replaced by another one. Clearly, we are here at the very root of the propaganda story about the periodic elimination of the "Sonderkommandos."⁹¹

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 243.

⁸⁸ "Obóz koncentracyjny...", op. cit. (note 4), p. 37.

⁸⁹ At that time, the term "Sonderkommando" was still unknown.

⁹⁰ Danuta Czech's assertion is contradictory in itself: If the "Sonderkommando" assigned to the digging of mass graves for the allegedly gassed victims of the so-called "Bunkers" was established on July 4, 1942, who dug the mass graves for the victims allegedly gassed in "Bunker I" between March 20 and July 3, 1942?

⁹¹ In the introduction to the book *Testimoni della catastrofe. Deposizioni di prigionieri del Sonderkommando ebraico di Auschwitz-Birkenau (1945)* (Ombre corte, Verona 2004, p. 16), Carlo Saletti wrote:

"Memoirs and critical texts on Auschwitz are legion, in which it is maintained that the life expectancy of the prisoners in the Sonderkommando did not exceed four months and that once

Danuta Czech is unable to furnish us with the name of even a single member of the first "Sonderkommando" of Birkenau, which was allegedly gassed in the morgue of crematorium I. J.-C. Pressac, on the other hand, succeeded in finding one: Maurice Benroubi. This man claims to have been assigned to the "Sonderkommando" after his arrival at Auschwitz on July 23, 1942, and to have unceremoniously been transferred to the Jawischowitz camp on September 4, 1942.⁹² Another self-styled member of the first "Sonderkommando," Dr. André Lettich, likewise survived the alleged gassing in crematorium I and in March 1943 was transferred (at his own request!) to the gypsy camp at Birkenau.⁹³ Alfred Wetzler, in a report that is included in the so-called "Auschwitz Protocols," which started circulating in the spring of 1944, writes:⁹⁴

"On December 17, 1942, 200 young Jews from Slovakia who had been working in the so-called Sonderkommando at the gassing [operations] and the incineration of the corpses, were executed in Birkenau. The execution was motivated by the organization of a mutiny and an attempt to escape, which had been revealed earlier by another Jew. The Kommando was replaced by 200 Jews from Poland who had just arrived with a transport from Makow. Among those executed were: Alexander Weiss, Trnava; Fero Wagner, Trnava; Schneider Oskar, Trnava; Wetzler Dezider, Trnava; Aladar Spitzer, Trnava; Vojtech Weiss, Trnava."

At the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, Alfred Wetzler returned to the question of the gassing of the "Sonderkommando":⁹⁵

"One day in December 1942, the Birkenau Sonderkommando did not report for work. It was at the time 300 strong. Prior to that, I had been given a letter from a detainee in this unit, in which he said good-bye to his sister who was likewise in the camp. On that day, many SS men were in the camp. Fifteen detainees were selected from the Sonderkommando. Together with Palitzsch and Stiwitz, Broad did the selecting and took these 15 men to the morgue in section B1b. I have not been able to find out why these 15 men were chosen in particular. The remaining 285 detainees from one of the shifts of the Sonderkommando had to assemble on the other side of the camp section. A large number of SS men then led this group to Auschwitz. The 15 that had been selected were shot by Palitzsch, Stiwitz, and Broad. At that time, there were mainly Jews from Slovakia in the Sonderkommando, with numbers in the 36,000s. They had come to Auschwitz from Lublin."

that period was over they were systematically eliminated. Neither of those two assertions is true."

⁹² J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 37), p. 162f.

⁹³ André Lettich, *Trente-quatre mois dans les Camps de Concentration. Témoignage sur les crimes "scientifiques" commis par les médecins allemands*, Imprimerie Union Coopérative, Tours 1946, pp. 27-30.

⁹⁴ APMO, *Akta obozowego RO*, tomo XXa, sygn. D-RO/129, pp. 22f.

⁹⁵ Hermann Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozess. Eine Dokumentation*, Europa Verlag, Vienna 1965, pp. 531f.

Alfred Wetzler was deported to Auschwitz from Slovakia on April 13, 1942, and registered as number 29,162. He therefore would have had direct knowledge about the men in the “Sonderkommando” who were allegedly gassed, whose names he could have supplied. Before we check this detail, however, it is necessary to state that his declaration at the Auschwitz trial clashes violently with his report made in 1944: whereas in the latter the number of men in the “Sonderkommando” was 200 and the place of execution was Birkenau, during the trial the number had increased to 300 and the place of execution had moved to Auschwitz.

Wetzler is the only witness to give precise and verifiable indications regarding the murder of the “Sonderkommando,” that is:

- the date: December 17, 1942
- the number of detainees: 200 (or 300)
- the nationality of the detainees: Slovakian Jews
- the origin of the detainees: Lublin concentration camp
- the ID numbers of the detainees: in the 36,000s

So let us check the data. A transport of Slovakian Jews did in fact arrive at Auschwitz from Lublin concentration camp on May 22, 1942: The 1,000 detainees that made it up received the ID numbers 36,132–37,131.⁹⁶ Obviously, we have here the transport Alfred Wetzler refers to and from which the 200 or 300 detainees of the “Sonderkommando” allegedly gassed on December 17, 1942, are said to have been selected.

Actually, due to the deplorable catastrophic hygienic and sanitary conditions in the Birkenau camp, 947 of these 1,000 detainees died between May 27 and August 15.⁹⁷ If, therefore, only 53 of these detainees were still alive on August 15, 1942, it is impossible for 200 or 300 of them to have been gassed on December 17, all the more so as 20 of the 53 detainees died between August 16, 1942, and March 1, 1943, as shown by Table 1 (next page).⁹⁸

Hence, only one detainee from this transport died in December of 1942!

Furthermore, out of the six detainees Alfred Wetzler claims were murdered during the alleged elimination of the “Sonderkommando” on December 17, 1942, only one appears in the Death Books: Wetzler Dezider, born at Trnava on March 11, 1908. He, however, died on July 10, 1942 (ID number 14676).

By 1947, the story of the gassing of the Birkenau “Sonderkommando” on December 17, 1942, had reached a certain degree of completion. On August 28, 1947, the former detainee Henryk Porębski made a deposition during the preparation of the Auschwitz garrison trial in which he declared:⁹⁹

“The first Kommando of detainees as such was formed at Birkenau in April or May of 1942. It had 20 members. Up to June, this Sonderkom-

⁹⁶ APMM, fot. 423, name list of the transport. The list also includes the dates of death of the detainees who died prior to August 15, 1942.

⁹⁷ AGK, NTN, 88, p. 114, statistical data by Otto Wolken, and APMM, fot. 423.

⁹⁸ APMM, fot. 423, name list of the transport of May 22, 1942; Staatliches Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau (ed.), *Sterbebücher von Auschwitz*, K.G. Saur, Munich/New Providence/London/Paris 1995.

⁹⁹ AGK, NTN, 144, p. 127.

Table 1: Entries in Auschwitz *Death Book* of Slovakian Jews from Lublin camp registered at Auschwitz on May 22, 1942, and confirmed dead between Aug. 16, 1942, and March 1, 1943.

ID no.	Last name	First name	Date of birth	Date of death	<i>Sterbebuch</i> no.
36179	Bauer	Ladislaus	Sept. 27, 1925	Aug. 16, 1942	21295
36650	Blau	Maximilian	Dec. 14, 1910	Aug. 16, 1942	22370
37045	Ehrenreich	Samuel	July 27, 1925	Aug. 16, 1942	21296
37056	Hoenig	David	Oct. 15, 1926	Aug. 16, 1942	21245
37098	Mozes	Imrich	Nov. 28, 1927	Aug. 16, 1942	21364
36829	Hajnal	Zoltan	Apr. 27, 1922	Aug. 22, 1942	23914
36767	Ringel	Heinz	July 28, 1921	Aug. 22, 1942	23863
37065	Klein	Ladislaus	Dec. 30, 1925	Aug. 24, 1942	24566
36492	Sachs	Leo	Feb. 4, 1900	Aug. 25, 1942	24900
36498	Gerler	Josef	Oct. 18, 1924	Sept. 4, 1942	27683
36900	Schlesinger	Aladar	Apr. 13, 1924	Sept. 12, 1942	30198
37039	Braunstein	Samuel	Nov. 18, 1926	Sept. 16, 1942	30894
36338	Mandel	Arnold	Mar. 18, 1912	Sept. 23, 1942	32464
36186	Joeger	Max	May 4, 1919	Oct. 6, 1942	34829
36774	Politzer	Wilhelm	May 27, 1913	Oct. 14, 1942	35883
36343	Engel	Vidor	May 3, 1907	Oct. 21, 1942	36947
37084	Adler	Isidor	July 24, 1924	Oct. 24, 1942	37330
37106	Fenster	Imrich	Aug. 11, 1926	Dec. 3, 1942	43046
36214	Rosenzweig	Josef	Feb. 7, 1915	Jan. 14, 1943	2116
37112	Margulies	Josef	Aug. 5, 1927	Mar. 1, 1943	12252

mando was changed more or less every other week by killing the ones who belonged to it. From mid-1942 onwards it grew steadily, reaching 800 detainees in December 1942. On December 8, on the orders of Grabner, the whole Kommando was taken to the main camp at 9 in the morning and was gassed in the gas chamber of the old crematorium. Some of the corpses were burnt in the crematorium, the others on pyres at Birkenau."

This account, again without any documentary evidence, was then used by the Krakow tribunal in its trial of Maximilian Grabner.¹⁰⁰ The alleged gassing of 200 or 300 or 800 detainees of the so-called "Sonderkommando" in the morgue of crematorium I thus has no foundation in fact. This is confirmed by other documents.

Prior to their incineration, the detainees who died at Auschwitz were taken to a separate morgue, which was located in the basement of block 28, where their ID numbers were registered in a special register, the *Leichenhallenbuch* (morgue book). For December 3, 1942 – the official date set by D. Czech – this register shows the ID numbers of 125 deceased detainees; on the 4th, there are 118 and on the 5th, 102 such entries. From December 6 onward the number of deaths decreases significantly: 22 for the 6th, 48 for the 7th, 53 for the 8th. On the first two days of December, the numbers had been 86 and 59

¹⁰⁰ GARF, 7021-108-39, p. 51a.

respectively.¹⁰¹ In November, there had been 1,688 deaths, 56 per day on average.¹⁰² In December, the figure was 1,741, again an average of 56 deaths per day.¹⁰²

Of the 125 detainees who died on December 3, 15 were brought in from the satellite Kommando at Chelmek, 2 from the Monowitz camp ("Buna"), and 1 from the satellite Kommando at Golleschau.¹⁰³ Of the 118 dead of December 4, 9 had come from Monowitz.¹⁰⁴ Finally, of the 102 detainees who died on December 5, 11 came from Birkenau, 2 from the satellite Kommando at Budy and 6 from Monowitz.¹⁰⁵ Hence, for the 345 detainees who died between December 3 and 5, 35 died outside the camp and only 11 at Birkenau; all other deaths occurred at Auschwitz.

Danuta Czech does not comment on the fact that the corpses of the detainees of the so-called Sonderkommando are not listed in the "*Leichenhallenbuch*." However, she claims that 64 registered detainees were killed by lethal injection on December 3, 78 on the 4th, and 60 on the 5th,¹⁰⁶ altogether 202 out of the total of 345. Thus, the SS would have had no motive for not registering the members of the "Sonderkommando" allegedly gassed, and the fact that they do not appear in the registry at that time simply means that they were not killed. Besides, the gassed are said to have been incinerated in the crematorium, as stated by the witness Jankowski.¹⁰⁷ However, between December 3 and 5, the crematorium received 10 tons of coke,¹⁰⁸ sufficient for the incineration of $(10,000 \div 28^{109} =)$ 357 corpses. Hence, only the 345 corpses registered in the "*Leichenhallenbuch*" were cremated, and this demonstrates that the story of the gassing of the 300 or 390 or 800 members of the "Sonderkommando" is pure fiction.

That said, let us turn to Jankowski's testimony. He declared that he had heard from detainees employed in the crematorium that

"even before this gassing some gassings had taken place in this same morgue and in other rooms of the crematorium." (my emphasis).¹¹⁰

The alleged gassing "in other rooms of the crematorium" is absolute nonsense. Jankowski furthermore affirmed, and confirmed under oath on September 29, 1980, that during the only homicidal gassing, about which he could testify, he had been confined to the coke storage room together with other service personnel.¹¹¹

¹⁰¹ AGK, OB, 385, *Leichenhallenbuch*, pp. 32-42.

¹⁰² AGK, NTN, 143, *Leichenhallenbuch*. Analysis by J. Sehn, p. 142.

¹⁰³ AGK, OB, 385, *Leichenhallenbuch*, pp. 35f.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 37f.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 39f.

¹⁰⁶ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), pp. 349-352.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. below.

¹⁰⁸ APMO, D-AuI-4, Segregator 22, 22a, List of "Coke and coal for the crematoria in tons."

¹⁰⁹ As for the consumption of coke, cf. my study "The Crematoria Ovens..." op. cit. (note 42), pp. 292f.

¹¹⁰ "Inmitten des grauenvollen Verbrechens," op. cit. (note 82), p. 48.

¹¹¹ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 37), p. 125.

He asserted, moreover, that the detainees of the crematorium “Sonderkommando” were assigned “for two days” to transporting the corpses of the 390 alleged gassed victims from the morgue to the furnace hall.¹¹² As there were 9¹¹³ “ordinary workers” in the “Sonderkommando” who took 30 corpses of those who had been shot¹¹⁴ to the furnace room every hour, it is clear that those two days were not needed for the transportation but for the incineration of the corpses. The 3 double-muffle ovens of the crematorium thus had a maximum capacity of $(390 \div 2 =)$ 190 corpses per day, but this contradicts both the official account – 340 corpses per day – and Jankowski’s own statement, according to which into each muffle

*“could be placed up to 12 corpses, but in general one did not load more than 5, because this number burned more quickly,”*¹¹⁵
which is nonsense from the standpoint of heat technology.¹¹⁶

No less surprising is the fact that this witness, who claims to have worked in crematorium I from November 1941 until July 1943,¹¹⁷ does not even know how the ovens operated, because he asserts that “the corpses lay on grids *under which there was burning coke.*” (my italics)¹¹⁸

Actually, the coke burned in the gasifier, a vertical chamber lined with refractory bricks housed in a special brick structure, which stood behind the ovens and which was connected to the individual muffles by a special opening, through which the combustion gasses passed from the gasifier and the flames that struck the corpse placed on the grid inside the muffle.

On October 3, 1980, Jankowski stated the following under oath:¹¹⁹

“It is at Auschwitz that I saw for the first time a gassing in the morgue. This room had no windows, but there were ventilators in the ceiling. The two thick wooden doors of the room, one in the side wall, the other in the end wall, had been made gas-tight. The room was lit by electricity. The victims of this gassing were about 400 Jews brought from Birkenau. The men of the Sonderkommando, including myself, saw them enter the yard, then we were shut in the coke store. When the Sonderkommando men came out, they saw and I saw only their clothes in the yard. Thirty minutes later, the Sonderkommando was ordered to transport the corpses to the furnace, situated about five metres from the door of the morgue, in a separate room.”

Between August 28 and September 6, 1985, Jankowski gave an account in Polish at the Auschwitz Museum under the name of Fajnzylberg, which was

¹¹² “Inmitten des grauenvollen Verbrechens,” op. cit. (note 82), p. 49.

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 43f.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 45.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 43.

¹¹⁶ According to Jankowski, the cremation capacity of crematorium I was 1,440 corpses per day. See below.

¹¹⁷ “Inmitten des grauenvollen Verbrechens,” op. cit. (note 82), 42 and 52.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 43.

¹¹⁹ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 37), pp. 124f.

recorded by Franciszek Piper. On the subject of crematorium I, he stated the following:¹²⁰

"In the crematorium, the corpses of the detainees who died at the camp [and] of those who had been murdered in the gas chamber were burned. I remember the gassing of some 400 members of the Sonderkommando that had been assigned to the open-air cremation of corpses or to other gasings. [...] There were three ovens in the crematorium; each one had 2 hearths. Into each opening one normally loaded 3 corpses. Only toward the end of work, 10–12 corpses would be loaded, which then burned in our absence. Such a load of corpses was not easy [to burn], therefore the Kapos took care of it. The corpses were packed so tightly that a special stoking device^[121] was introduced below them. The cremation of a load of 5 corpses took about half an hour. [¹²²...]

On the inside, the gas chamber was painted white; in the ceiling, as far as I remember, there were two openings for the introduction of the gas; there were no false showers, I do not remember any ventilators."

In this statement as well, we have a wealth of technical nonsense: a normal load was 3 corpses per muffle; 5 corpses would burn within half an hour; towards the end of the day one loaded 10–12 corpses.

It is worthwhile noting here that one muffle of the Auschwitz crematorium ovens could burn a single corpse in one hour.

It is, moreover, very curious to see that Jankowski did not know anything about "ventilators" in 1945, then miraculously remembered them in 1980, only to forget about them again in 1985!

2. Erwin Bartel

This Polish witness was interned at the Auschwitz camp between June 5, 1941, and October 26, 1944. After about three months, he was assigned to the Political Department of the camp, reporting to SS-Unterscharführer Hans Stark and SS-Untersturmführer Maximilian Grabner. On August 27, 1947, Bartel was questioned by Jan Sehn and declared the following about Grabner:¹²³

"I personally saw him watching the murder of the victims with gas in the gas chamber of crematorium I. He observed the development of the gassing from above before the Zyklon was thrown in."

¹²⁰ "Relacja" (Account) by Alter Fajnzylberg, August 28 to September 6, 1985. APMO, *Oświadczenia* (declarations), vol. 113, pp. 3f.

¹²¹ The idea is that the corpses were loaded into the muffles by pushing them in with a special stoking device placed in the armpit.

¹²² "około pół godziny." For the 6 muffles of the crematorium, this corresponds to a cremation capacity of 1,440 corpses per day.

¹²³ AGK, NTN, 135, p. 241.

As the alleged gassings were done by the Political Department, to which the witness was attached, his knowledge in this regard is somewhat vague.

At the end of the 1950s, at the time of the preparation of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, Bartel made a declaration in Poland, in which he described the alleged homicidal activity of crematorium I in the following way:¹²⁴

"In 1942 – in March or April as far as I can remember – arriving transports were gassed in the old crematorium next to the main camp. At that time, the large crematoria at Birkenau had not yet been built. Stark used to be most interested in these things and has taken part in them. Our windows looked out on the crematorium, and so I could see that Stark went there and returned from there. Stark was also responsible for the boxes with the toxic gas Cyklon B. At times, these boxes were kept in the corridor next to our offices."

This is a rather general statement and is moreover in disagreement with Danuta Czech's *Kalendarium*, according to which no transport said to have been gassed arrived in March or April 1942 and no homicidal activity went on during that time.¹²⁵ The Zyklon B, because of its dangerous nature, was kept at the SS sickbay under the responsibility of the SS garrison physician, and it is absolute nonsense that whole boxes of this dangerous disinfestant would have been kept – even if only "temporarily" – in a corridor outside of the offices of the Political Department under the responsibility of Grabner.

3. Filip Müller

Filip Müller was deported to Auschwitz from Slovakia on April 13, 1942, (the same transport as Alfred Wetzler's) and received the ID number 29236.

He appeared as a prosecution witness at the 16th hearing of the trial of the Auschwitz camp garrison and made the following deposition, which has gone practically unnoticed until today and merits quoting in full:¹²⁶

"I was Auschwitz camp detainee No. 29236. I arrived at the Auschwitz concentration camp in April 1942. In May 1942 I was assigned to block 11 and endured terrible sufferings. They consisted mainly in the fact that we could not have drinking water. On account of that, I had to go looking for leftover tea at 6 in the morning in the yard of block 11, to 'organize' it, as this sort of activity was sometimes called in the camp.

There, the Oberscharführer of block 11 surprised me and took me to a special room. In the afternoon, the camp Kommandant Aumeier came to that room and, of course, asked me what I had done. Then he took me to another room and after having brought in 6 more detainees, took us all to the gate of the Auschwitz camp. From the gate of the Auschwitz camp, the

¹²⁴ ZStL, ref. IV 402AR-Z 37/58, p. 619. The date of the declaration is not indicated.

¹²⁵ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), months indicated.

¹²⁶ APMO, Proces zalogi (Trial of the Auschwitz camp garrison), vol. VII, pp. 1-4.

guards, ordered to do so by Aumeier, took us to the old crematorium of Auschwitz.

In this way, I was present at the gassings in the crematorium from May 1942 until January 18, 1945. When Aumeier came to the crematorium, he signed us over to his subordinate Unterscharführer Stark who took us, with many beatings, to the gas chamber and opened it. In that chamber, there was the first Slovakian transport, gassed. These detainees had been gassed with their clothes on.

As we were being beaten all the time and as we had no experience with the equipment of the crematorium, we caused a fire in the Auschwitz crematorium. For that reason, they could not burn the gassed victims. Upon Aumeier's initiative, at midnight that same day, two trucks were arranged, and the remaining corpses, some 800, were loaded on the trucks and taken to the neighborhood of Birkenau. We arrived at Birkenau around 1 in the morning and were escorted by the Red Cross, which lit us from behind with its headlights. In that car was the accused Aumeier as well as the head of the Political Department, Grabner. Under violent blows and in a hurry we had to unload the corpses into trenches which still had water in them, thus, the work took two days. After that, bloody and dirty as we were, they took us to block 11 and locked us up in cell 13. We were taken there by another Unterscharführer, who worked the night-shift, and the six of us were locked up. The next day, around 2 o'clock, after lunch, we were moved to the camp gate and waited there for the camp fire truck, painted green, in which were Aumeier and Grabner.

We climbed on the truck and went to the place where we had dumped the corpses the day before. First of all, we had to pile up the corpses in the mud in a heap, but as we could not do it properly, they beat the hell out of us. In all this, the leader was the head of the Political Department, Grabner, and Aumeier. Then we spread chlorine over the corpses and were again locked up in block 11, cell 13. We stayed in that cell for a year and a half, i.e., until the liquidation of the Auschwitz crematorium. I have known the accused Aumeier and Grabner. I saw them at least once a day, practically until the liquidation of the Auschwitz crematorium, but I want to mention a couple of things on their behavior.

At the time of the first massacre, the Kapos in the crematoria were German. One day, one of them had a bandaged hand. Unterscharführer Grabner wanted to know why: 'Fritz, why have you got a bandaged hand?' Fritz answered: 'I have killed another five Jews.' 'You stupid ass, for that you don't have to use your hand, for that you have steel, and besides, if you kill five of them, there will be [another] ten [to kill], and if you kill ten, there will be [another] twenty.'

In the Auschwitz camp, I also saw that the flesh of the non-Jewish detainees who were shot was used for various purposes. They were often shot in the presence of Mengele and others, whose names I do not know, and

with Aumeier and Grabner present as well. Right away, the flesh of their calves would be put into cans, and in this way they put aside 6–8 cans of flesh each week. It sometimes happened that a delegation from Germany arrived, with their swastika armbands, when Aumeier and Grabner were around, asking whether there was any human flesh. Aumeier used to say: 'We could also use horse meat, but it would be a pity to waste it!'

Unterscharführer Grabner was also guilty of sending out urns with the ashes of victims [labeled] completely wrongly, i.e., they filled 3000 urns with ordinary ash, which were then stored in the SS hospital in front of the crematorium, from where they would be sent out upon the orders of the Political Department.

I saw Aumeier and Grabner shooting Russian prisoners in block 11 and Polish political prisoners, too. When Aumeier and Grabner felt that this (shooting) was too slow, they used to beat them before they died and spoke faster[sic].

When the Polish political prisoners shouted 'Long live free Poland' before they died, they took them aside and shot them in the stomach so that they would lie in agony for two or three hours.

Untersturmführer Grabner, as I have already said, was the main advocate and promoter of the Auschwitz, not the Birkenau, crematorium.

There were cases in which corpses arrived from Kattowitz with their heads cut off; these corpses came from the Security Police at Kattowitz.

Grabner and Aumeier also took part in the selection of the sick and the weak in the hospitals and sent them to be shot. Untersturmführer Grabner participated in all the selections for the crematorium until 1943. All the selections which took place in the crematorium were done in the presence of Grabner until 1943, and also with Aumeier present. Normally, the shooting was done by Hauptscharführer Palit[z]sch and Unterscharführer Stark, who always received detailed instructions from them during the executions."

In a later declaration published by Ota Kraus and Erich Kulka, Müller speaks about these events in the following terms:¹²⁷

"I arrived at Auschwitz on April 20, 1942, with the first Slovakian transport and initially worked in this concentration camp like all the other detainees. On May 24, 1942, my comrades and I suffered a great misfortune. We were very thirsty and were punished for water theft by being assigned to the gas chamber of the crematorium. The SS man led us there just when a few hundred of corpses were lying there with their clothes still on and their baggage. We were unspeakably terrified when we realized what was ahead of us. Five detainees were already on the job; we had to move the corpses into the ovens.

We were being supervised by the SS man Starck [Stark], who was about twenty years old. He beat me with his stick and advised me to get on with

¹²⁷ O. Kraus, E. Kulka, op. cit. (note 29), pp. 130-132.

it, [or] I would eventually end up in the ovens, too. Two Slovakian doctors, faced with this desperate situation, implored Stark to shoot them.

We had no experience with heating [the ovens], and that had its consequences. Fire broke out in the crematorium, and it became impossible to burn the corpses. The SS accused us of sabotage, and four of our comrades were beaten to death because of this.

When the fire had been extinguished, seven new detainees were brought in. We loaded the remaining corpses on trucks and then I went on the eeriest trip on my life. It was late at night by then, and I sat on the last one of the trucks on a pile of corpses. Behind us there was a small car that showed on its sides and its roof a large red cross. The headlights of this car blinded us and shone upon us and our horrible load. Armed SS men were guarding us.

When the cars had reached the field behind the camp, they stopped by a swampy hole in the ground that had water in it, and we had to throw the corpses into this water. Around three in the morning we had finished this work and then returned to the camp. In the camp, they locked us up in a dark cell in the execution block 11 and without food or water, bloody and dirty as we were, we had to wait there until noon the next day. When they let us out, each one of us was given a loaf of bread.

Then a fire truck took us to that hole; it was near Brzezinky, near the newly built concentration camp of Birkenau. We had to wait for a long time until the water had been scooped out of the hole. Not far away, we saw another group of detainees digging more holes; as we learnt later, this group was the Birkenau Sonderkommando.^[128]

And then it started. They herded us into the hole and we stood in the mud up to our belts. Our job was to lay the corpses in a heap and to make room for more. SS officers and men stood near the edge of the hole and enjoyed watching our horrible activity. They threw rocks at us to make us work faster. When we had finally covered the corpses with chlorine and dirt we went back into the camp, into our dark cell, in which we lived until August 1943. From morning till night we worked in the crematorium.

In the crematorium I witnessed a great deal, scenes the world was never to learn about. They had not reckoned with my survival, the survival of an eyewitness, and even I myself had never thought that I would live to be free once again. I cannot and I will not describe all these things in detail. It is much too much, and far too horrible for most people to believe. Not even I can comprehend today what I had to live through. In the Auschwitz crematorium, I was forced to lend a hand to that infamous SS man, Palitzsch, who executed the sentences of the camp Gestapo. He murdered expertly and massively. The victims, usually political detainees, had

¹²⁸ As we have seen above, according to D. Czech this "Sonderkommando" was set up over two months later!

to line up against the wall in groups of five and Palitzsch shot them in cold blood.

It may have been June 17 or 18, 1942. On that fine sunny day everything was hastily cleaned, 'general cleaning' was the order of the day. We watched the excited SS people and realized that something was going on, but we did not know what, we could only surmise that some visitor was expected. Around ten o'clock, a high-ranking SS officer appeared in the door, wearing a white uniform, accompanied by two SS men – it was Himmler himself.

He inspected everything meticulously. He saw us in the room, in which the clothes and underclothes of those executed were stored. When he saw those blood-stained clothes, he was surprised and asked our SS bosses why there was this blood. Not satisfied with their answer, he became angry and said sharply: 'We need the clothes of these dirty dogs for our German people! It is a waste to gas those people with their clothes on!'

So after this visit, the gas chambers were disguised as wash-rooms with pipes and faucets, and the people had to undress before they were gassed. In the summer of 1943 [1942], the ovens and chimneys of the Auschwitz crematorium were gutted by a fire. The Nazi engineers rebuilt them, but three months later, everything collapsed all over again. By that time, four crematoria were already in operation at Birkenau. We were moved there as well, as part of the Sonderkommando, into block 13 of the men's main camp B IIa.

The work in the Auschwitz crematorium also entailed filling the urns. We filled them with the ash and the dirt from the great pile and closed them with metal lids, on which we embossed the names of the victims, their date of birth and date of death, in accordance with the list we received from the Political Department. The urns were placed into boxes, some 20 x 20 x 40 cm, and labelled with the address of the family. They had to pay 2000 crowns for such an urn. No urns, however, were sent to the families of Jews.

Many such urns were sent to Bohemia, Moravia, and to other countries. But none of them contains the ashes of the person whose name is indicated on the urn.

When I was moved from Auschwitz to Birkenau, there was a store of some 4,000 such urns."

At the Auschwitz trial, Müller reformulated his account as follows:¹²⁹

"Müller: I was brought to Auschwitz on April 13, 1942. The whole transport, some 250 men, Jews from Slovakia, was housed in block 11. Once I was very thirsty and, together with a comrade, went into the yard of block 11, where there was a large cauldron full of tea. We wanted to drink. When we approached the cauldron, camp leader Aumeier and the block leader of [block] 11 came by and saw us. Aumeier said 'Just keep on drink-

¹²⁹ H. Langbein, op. cit. (note 95), pp. 459-463.

ing!' When we were near the vat, the SS men pressed our heads into the tea. I lost consciousness. Later, I was told by the block elder to report to the block leader office. I went into the yard. An Unterscharführer opened the gate. I recognized him, it was Stark. He beat me with a whip. Another door was opened, and I saw an oven and three detainees who were working on a cart full of corpses.

At the time, I was 20 years old and had never seen a corpse. I stopped. Stark beat us and yelled 'Get going, damn it, take the clothes off the corpses!' There were perhaps 700 corpses there, with their clothes on, children, women, men, with packages strewn about. To the right of them, there were some 100 more people, with 'SU' on their clothes. Broken suitcases, bread, clothes were lying around, full of blood. We had to undress the corpses, Stark beat us all the time. It is a dreadful job to take clothes and shoes off rigid corpses. If we tore anything, Stark beat us again and again.

Presiding Judge: Did the corpses show any wounds?

Müller: Yes.

PJ: Had they been shot?

M: No, they had been gassed. I was to see that later. The corpses stood in front of the ventilators, tightly packed. I saw a dead child hanging from the mother's breast. There were green crystals on the floor. There was a smell of almonds, or of canned heat. Even today, such a smell makes me sick.

There were seven of us in the Sonderkommando. At that time, two ovens were in operation. In front of each oven, there was a cart for the introduction of the corpses. Three corpses were loaded on the carts at one time. Those carts ran on rails. One day, three of us could not go on working. Stark drew his revolver and shot three comrades, Weiß, Goldschmidt, and Neumann, before my eyes.

Because the number of corpses increased rapidly, we had to load them on trucks and take them out to a field during the night. A large hole had been dug there, with water in it. There were four of us at the time and we had to throw four to five hundred corpses into those holes. A car with a red cross stood near the hole and lit the scene with its headlights. Afterwards, Stark led us back to block 11. We came into a bunker cell without light. It was terrible to hear the clanking of the keys in the morning.

We were given soup. Three new detainees, Frenchmen, were brought into the cell. Then we were all taken to the motor pool again and taken to the hole in a fire truck. The car pumped the water out of the hole and we had to climb into the ditch, which was now very swampy, and to lay the corpses on a pile. Near the edge of the hole, we saw Grabner, Aumeier and others from the SS. Stark was in command. We could hardly remove the corpses, they fell apart in our hands. Arms came off. The corpses were water-logged. But Stark treated us like animals. Two French comrades could

not continue. Stark yelled 'What's the matter, Moritz!,' took out his pistol and shot the two who had been leaning on the dead.

Finally, we had to return to the camp on the double. We were covered with blood and dirt. They took us as we were to the bunker, cell 13 this time. There was light in it. It was a dreadful night. We were finished, mentally and physically. We slept on the floor, like animals. When the block leader brought us the food the next day, we asked to be allowed to wash. He let us go up into the wash-room, we were given other clothes and were then taken back into cell 13.

At nightfall, we heard shouts in the yard 'Fishing command, get ready!' I can imitate Stark's way of shouting even today. It meant that we now had to put on our wooden clogs. We were taken into the yard and into the crematorium. Two Slovak detainees came along this time. Stark took us to the crematorium, lined us up against the wall and told us to wait for further orders. We were not to speak to anyone, otherwise we would be shot.

After some time, the doors of the yard were opened, and some 350 Jewish women, men and children were brought in. Grabner, Aumeier, Stark, and others from the SS were present. Stark yelled, 'Now, everyone undress!' Later, I saw from the clothes that they were Polish Jews. They must have known that something was not right and undressed only slowly. Stark and the others kept on yelling 'Get on with it, take your clothes off!' Stark beat the people with a whip. I saw a man who wanted to take his tie off – but he did not have one on. The children went to their parents, but they did not cry. They were probably Jews from the ghetto.

Then they were all led into the gas chamber. There was only one ventilator there, and the lights were on. The door was closed and Stark ordered, 'Pick up those rags!' Again, the gate was opened and again, 300 people entered. It was the same thing once again. When the gas had been fed into the chamber from the roof of the crematorium, there was heavy coughing, children and adults screamed, there was chaos. After a while, things quieted down, the coughing subsided, and we saw Stark coming down from the roof with his gas mask. We had to search the clothes and to put all valuables, dollars, gold, and other things into a box. Stark stood near it and pocketed what he liked. At that time, May and June 1942, gassings took place either before the morning roll call or after the evening roll call, never during the day. [...] I watched Stark at his job for something like 6 weeks. During this time he must have taken at least ten or eleven thousand people into the gas chambers."

Finally, as I have already mentioned, in 1979 Müller published a book of memoirs, in which he again described events in the Auschwitz crematorium.

Before we examine the declarations of this witness in detail, it must be said that in his deposition during the trial of the Auschwitz camp garrison he in fact made no mention of his activity as a member of the so-called "Sonderkommando" in the crematoria at Birkenau. He did mention this in the declara-

tion published by Kraus and Kulka, but devoted less than 45 percent of his story to it, a story, which, in any case, is made up of fanciful anecdotes, such as the removal of human flesh from executed detainees for culturing bacteria (although this no longer took place at Auschwitz, but in crematorium V of Birkenau), or the systematic draining of the blood of young women (for German military hospitals) or, finally, the account about SS-*Hauptscharführer* Moll, who had the habit of throwing Jewish babies “into the boiling human fat”!¹³⁰ The same historical value can be assigned to the little tale of the Kapo who regularly killed Jewish detainees and was reprimanded by the SS only because he had hurt his hand in doing so.

In his 1979 book of memoirs, Müller devoted 25 percent of the text to events in crematorium I and the remaining 75 percent to happenings in the Birkenau crematoria: from 0 to 75 percent, a most astounding literary progression!

The witness is not even certain of the date of his arrival at Auschwitz, for he gives it either as April 13 or April 20, 1942. His ID number (29236) was assigned on April 13, the day on which a transport of Slovak Jews arrived at the camp, which, however, comprised 1077 Jews, 634 men and 443 women, and not 250, as the witness declared.

The events surrounding his assignment to the crematorium are anything but clear. Being thirsty, he – by himself and simultaneously together with another detainee – goes out looking for “leftover tea” which, however was “a cauldron full of tea” or “the vats with tea for the night,”¹³¹ hence not really leftovers. Strangely, however, he was punished and sent to the crematorium for “theft of water.” He was apprehended by the *Blockführer* of block 11 and by Aumeier, who told him sarcastically to go on drinking, but at the same time came to Müller’s cell in the afternoon to ask him why he was there, as he did not know.

The witness was sent to the crematorium together with six other detainees, hence altogether seven. But after the first day at work they “locked up the six of us” in block 11, even though no one had been lost. Or else Müller was taken, together with his comrade who was (or was not) present when they stole the tea, to the crematorium where there already were five detainees at work, so that together they would again be seven. Of those, however, four were killed the same day, having been made responsible for the fire that had broken out in the crematorium. Once the fire was under control, another seven detainees were assigned to the crematorium. Hence, before they started out on the work of burying the corpses, there were now ten detainees. According to another variant of the story, there were seven detainees in the “Sonderkommando,” three of whom were shot, so that there were only four of them left when the burying started.

¹³⁰ O. Kraus, E. Kulka, op. cit. (note 29), pp. 133f.

¹³¹ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 19.

In Müller's book, finally, there are three¹³² detainees who were shot for sabotage, and those employed in the burials the first night are said to have been seven.¹³³

The corpses to be buried were loaded on one truck,¹³² or two, or three. The detainees doing this job the first night were four, seven, or ten. The corpses – alternatively “some 800” and 400 to 500 – were thrown into one or several holes. Here the ground water was pumped out by a “fire truck” and, at the same time, by a “motor pump.”¹³⁴

Let us now move on to a review of what the witness has to say about the crematorium and the “gas chambers.”

On May 24, 1942, he was assigned to work in the camp crematorium. He noted right away the round chimney of this building,¹³⁵ which, however, was square.¹³⁶ Then he was led into the morgue where, among suitcases and backpacks, there were dead men and women who still had their clothes on. The witness was given the order to undress them. Apparently, the SS, after eight months of alleged homicidal gassings, had not yet understood that it was easier to have the victims undress before they were gassed! According to the witness Walter Petzold, this “disastrous mistake” had been committed by the SS only on the occasion of the first nebulous homicidal gassing in Bunker 11.¹³⁷ They thus had learned their lesson at that time.

The claim by the witness that the undressing of the corpses of the allegedly gassed victims was begun because of an order from Himmler is therefore ludicrous. As far as that visit is concerned, it is an established fact that it took place on July 17 and 18, 1942, and Himmler could not have inspected the crematorium “around ten o'clock,” because he was received at Kattowitz by Gaulleiter Bracht, SS-*Obergruppenführer* Schmauser and by Höss at 3:15 p.m.; from Kattowitz he was accompanied to the camp, which he inspected even later.¹³⁸ There is no proof that Himmler ever inspected the crematorium. The photographs taken during the visit show Himmler wearing a gray uniform¹³⁹ and Müller thus could not have seen him wearing “a white uniform.”

The alleged disguise of the morgue into “wash-rooms with pipes and faucets” is in contradiction to Jankowski's declaration, mentioned above, according to which there were “no false showers” in the alleged gas chamber. Hans

¹³² Ibid., p. 33.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 37.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 40.

¹³⁵ Ibid., pp. 22 and 31.

¹³⁶ “Inventory plan of building No. 47a, BW 11. Crematorium” (*Bestandplan des Gebäudes Nr. 47a. B.W. 11. Krematorium*) of April 10, 1942. Cf. document 4.

¹³⁷ W. Petzold, “Bericht über die erste Vergasung von Gefangenen in deutschen Konzentrationslagern, Mauthausen den 17. Mai 1945.” Staatsanwaltschaft beim LG Frankfurt (Main), Strafsache beim Schwurgericht Frankfurt (Main) gegen Baer und Andere wegen Mordes (investigation files to the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial), ref. Js 444/59, Vol. 31, p. 5312.

¹³⁸ Cf. in this respect my study *Special Treatment in Auschwitz. Origin and Meaning of a Term*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 17-25f and 108.

¹³⁹ AGK, NTN, 97, pp. 21-31, photographs of Himmler's visit.

Stark expresses himself in similar terms.¹⁴⁰ Müller did not overlook the “little greenish-blue crystals” or simply “green” crystals spread out on the floor of the morgue,¹⁴¹ the residue of Zyklon B, which, however, was not in the form of “greenish-blue crystals” but of particles of gypsum, white in color. On account of its dangerous nature, the residue would be removed from the disinfection chambers as soon as the test for toxic substances (*Gasrestprobe*) yielded negative results and thus allowed the specialists to enter the room wearing their gas masks.¹⁴² This would also have been true for any homicidal gassings, and therefore the witness cannot have seen Zyklon B residues in the alleged homicidal gas chamber. In fact he has given a false description.

To his great surprise, Müller finds in the “gas chamber” the corpse of a girl with whom he had gone to school, and therefore the transport came from Slovakia; indeed, the “gas chamber” held “the first Slovakian transport to be gassed,” as he declared during the trial of the Auschwitz camp garrison.

Actually, according to Danuta Czech’s *Kalendarium*, on May 24, 1942, there was no homicidal gassing, let alone of a Jewish transport from Slovakia. After April 29, in fact, the next Jewish transport from Slovakia arrived at Auschwitz on June 20, 1942, and the 659 persons that made it up were all duly registered!¹⁴³ Hence Müller’s account of the first homicidal gassing is a complete invention.

Then *Unterscharführer* Stark allegedly ordered the corpses to be burnt:¹⁴⁴

“Stark gave orders to switch on the ventilators. A button was pushed and they began to rotate. Soon, however, they were turned off again, once Stark had looked into the ovens and convinced himself that the fire was burning well.”

This sentence, which refers to the pre-heating phase of the ovens, is nonsense. Each one of the 3 double-muffle ovens was equipped with a blowing device, consisting of a blower driven by a three-phase electric motor of 1.5 HP and of the corresponding ductwork, which entered the rear part of the oven and ran through the brickwork above the two muffles. Two more pipes branched out from it in the upper part of the two muffles and fed into the latter by means of four openings in the roof of the muffles. The function of the blowers, therefore, was not to fan the fire of the gasifiers, but to feed combustion air into the muffles. In the pre-heating phase of the ovens such air would only have resulted in cooling the refractory lining of the muffles.

Müller goes on to accurately describe the device for introducing the corpses into the ovens (*Leicheneinführungs-Vorrichtung*), but forgets an essential element, the pair of rollers attached to a fold-away frame, which was secured by a suitable supporting bar welded to the anchors of the oven in front

¹⁴⁰ Cf. below, section 8.

¹⁴¹ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 24.

¹⁴² Cf. in this respect my article “Auschwitz: ‘Gas Testers’ and Gas Residue Test Kits,” in: *The Revisionist*, 2(2) (May 2004), pp. 150-155.

¹⁴³ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), dates indicated.

¹⁴⁴ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), pp. 25f.

of the muffles. The omission probably stems from the fact that on the two ovens poorly rebuilt by the Poles in the years after the war the rollers had not been installed, whereas the device for introducing the corpses was correctly reconstructed.

How many ovens were in operation? At the Auschwitz trial, the witness declared: “at that time, two ovens were in operation,” but in his book he writes “all six ovens were burning.”¹⁴⁵ After the pre-heating period, the corpses were introduced into the ovens – three at a time.¹⁴⁶ About this the witness states:¹⁴⁷

“For the cremation of three corpses, the big wheels had specified 20 minutes, and it was up to Stark to make sure that this would be accomplished”

He then adds that in one hour 54 corpses could be burnt in the 3 double-muffle ovens, i.e., 3 corpses every twenty minutes in each muffle. We are here in the realm of technological fantasy. The cremation capacity of the Auschwitz ovens was one corpse per muffle per hour, a total of 6 corpses per hour in the six muffles. The witness has multiplied the capacity of the furnaces by a factor of nine!

Müller then relates that the crematorium personnel had forgotten “to shut down the ventilators of one oven”¹⁴⁸ – which is an erroneous statement because each oven had only one ventilator – with the following result:¹⁴⁸

“The flames had been fanned so strongly and the fire had already reached an intensity such that the refractory bricks in the chimney came loose and the oven burnt through, with the bricks falling into the flue that linked the oven to the chimney.”

This is another nonsensical statement. As has been explained above, the function of the blower was not to fan the fire, but to feed combustion air into the muffle. Because the blower brought in cold air, if air had been fed in, the result would have been the exact opposite of what the witness’ version: the two muffles of the oven would have cooled to the point of extinguishing the gasifier for lack of draft.

The “Instructions for the operation of the coke-fired Topf double-muffle cremation oven” specifies, in fact, for such a case:¹⁴⁹

“This temperature rise can be countered by blowing in air.”

Furthermore, no oven caught fire or was otherwise damaged in May–June 1942. Hence, Müller’s story is also false historically. In that period, only one such incident was recorded, which, however, did not involve the ovens. On May 13, the head of the camp administration requested the Central Construction Office to “repair the chimney and the engine house^[150] of the cremato-

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁴⁹ APMO, BW 11/1, p. 3.

¹⁵⁰ The little shed next to the crematorium and the chimney, which housed the motor of the forced draft system.

rium.”¹⁵¹ The work was done on May, 14 and 15. The first item did, in fact, not concern the chimney as such, but the “chimney under-channel,” i.e., the flue, which linked the three ovens to the chimney: 50 refractory bricks were replaced and 50 kg of refractory mortar were used.¹⁵² On May 30, SS-*Oberscharführer* Josef Pollock informed Bischoff that the chimney cover had loosened and cracks had appeared in the brickwork.¹⁵³ This, as we shall see, caused the old chimney to be knocked down and rebuilt, but all this lends no support whatsoever to the fairy-tale of the fire invented by our witness.

Hence, the witness has lied not only about a gassing of the Slovakian transport, but also about a fire in the crematorium. This enigmatic fire – Müller continues – also spread to the furnace hall and was brought under control only in the evening: the crematorium remained out of service.¹⁵⁴ It went back into service after a few days,¹⁵⁵ i.e., toward the end of May, when a transport of Jews arrived from Sosnowitz,¹⁵⁶ and 600 persons were gassed in the morgue of the crematorium.¹⁵⁷ However, according to the Auschwitz *Kalendarium*, the first transport of Jews from Sosnowitz arriving after May 30, 1942, (the day of Müller’s assignment to the crematorium) came to Auschwitz on June 17 and was allegedly gassed, in its entirety, in “Bunker 1” of Birkenau!¹⁵⁸

After three days of inactivity, if we follow Müller, another transport of a few hundred persons was likewise gassed in the morgue.¹⁵⁹ On this occasion, we encounter for the first time the alleged deceptive speech designed to calm the victims.¹⁶⁰ This took place at the end of May 1942, because the witness declares:¹⁶¹

“In this way, from the end of May onwards, one transport after another disappeared in the Auschwitz crematorium.”

Therefore, all of this – the three gasings and the fire – happened between May 24 and 31. However, according to Czech’s *Kalendarium*, no Jewish transport¹⁶² arrived at Auschwitz during that time. The witness goes on to state that during this period also occurred the damage to the crematorium, which required the rebuilding of the chimney. Here, Müller says:¹⁶³

¹⁵¹ “*Verwaltung KL Auschwitz. Bestellschein Nr. 451*” of May 13, 1942. APMO, BW11/5, p. 3: “*Den Kamin und das Motorenhaus des Krematoriums instanzzusetzen*” (to repair the chimney and the motor shed of the crematorium).

¹⁵² “*Aufstellung der ausgeführten Bauarbeiten*.” May 20, 1942. APMO, BW 11/5, pp. 5f., and “*Bericht über ausgeführte Arbeiten im Krematorium*” of June 1, 1942. APMO, BW11/5, pp. 1f.

¹⁵³ RGVA, 502-1-314, p. 12 and 502-1-312, p. 64.

¹⁵⁴ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 32.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

¹⁵⁸ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), p. 230.

¹⁵⁹ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), pp. 57-62.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁶² D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), pp. 216-218.

¹⁶³ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), 65.

"In place of the round chimney that had been destroyed during the fire at the crematorium, the bricklayer Kommando erected an enormous new quadrangular chimney."

Then he adds:¹⁶⁴

"The continuous operation, especially the strain on the ovens that went with it and that originally had not been taken into account, apparently caused the refractory bricks of the inner lining to disintegrate, threatening the collapse of the chimney. For that reason, in the summer of 1942 a new quadrangular chimney with a double lining of refractory was attached to the ovens. During this period, however, the operation of the ovens was not discontinued. The Kommando working on the chimney [mainly Jewish detainees] was about 30 strong."

Here, the witness either attributes two different causes to the damaging of the same chimney or else refers to two different chimneys. The first hypothesis entails an obvious contradiction, the second one is factually incorrect.

Actually, as has been noted above, the chimney of crematorium I showed initial damage at the end of May 1942, but had not been "destroyed." When dangerous cracks appeared in the brickwork, it was decided to knock it down and build a new one. The new chimney was put up by 688 detainees (and not by "about 30") between July 12 and August 8, the old one was demolished on July 6. Filip Müller's claim that the crematorium remained in operation during this period of construction is obvious nonsense, because it was necessary to build new flues, one 12.20 m long linking the ovens 1 and 2 to the new chimney, the other 7.375 m long for oven 3.¹⁶⁵ In July, coke deliveries to the crematorium were drastically reduced: after a shipment of 5 tons on July 18, the next shipment arrived only on August 10,¹⁶⁶ which means that the crematorium certainly remained inactive for some 20 days, July 20 through August 9.

Filip Müller returns to the question of the chimney, writing:¹⁶⁷

"The SS Construction Office^[168] had placed great hopes for a smooth operation of the crematorium in the new quadrangular chimney. Soon, however, it turned out that it was not up to its task. During operation, refractory bricks continually fell off, blocking the flue, through which the smoke had to pass. Jewish transports, still arriving as before, could no longer be 'handled' in the crematorium without a hitch. For that reason, the operation had to be curtailed in the fall of 1942."

Actually, the crematorium was put back into operation at full capacity without the new chimney having been properly dried: The brick-work, still humid, was damaged by the evaporation of water it contained, causing new cracks. On August 13, Bischoff, referring to a discussion he had had with SS-

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 74.

¹⁶⁵ Robert Koehler, "Rauchkanal für die Zentral-Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz O.S." of August 11, 1942. RGVA, 502-2-23, p. 18.

¹⁶⁶ APMO, D-Aul-4, Segregator 22, 22a, List of "Coke and coal for the crematoria in tons," p. 2.

¹⁶⁷ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 79.

¹⁶⁸ Recte: SS Central Construction Office.

Hauptsturmführer Mulka the day before, sent the following letter to the camp command:¹⁶⁹

"On the basis of the telephone conversation mentioned above, the camp command was informed that because of being heated too soon (all 3 ovens are in operation), damage to the brick-work of the new chimney unit has already appeared. Since the 3 cremation ovens were put into operation before the hardening of the mortar used for the brick-work of the chimney could take place, any further responsibility [on the part of this officer] for this unit must be refused."

The witness does not explicitly say when the alleged gassings in crematorium I were stopped, but he, too, speaks of the nebulous gassing of the men from the so-called "Sonderkommando," which is said to have occurred "in mid-December 1942,"¹⁷⁰ and this – if we refer to Jankowski's testimony – should have been the last gassing.

Müller assigns an impressive number of victims to the alleged gas chamber of crematorium I:¹⁷¹

"Tens of thousands of Jews from Upper Silesia, Slovakia, France, Holland, Yugoslavia, from the ghettos of Theresienstadt, Ciechanów, and Grodno were killed and cremated here."

In the deposition he made during the Auschwitz trial, mentioned above, he was even more precise:

"At that time, roughly in May and June 1942, gassings took place either before the morning roll call or after the evening roll call, never during the day. [...] I watched Stark at his job for something like 6 weeks. During this time he must have taken at least ten or eleven thousand people into the gas chambers."

Müller was assigned to the crematorium on May 24, 1942. The crematorium was shut down between July 19 or 20 and August 9 because of the demolition of the old chimney and the construction of the new one. In the autumn of that year the crematorium was used in a limited way. Therefore these "tens of thousands" of victims must have been killed between the end of May and the middle of July as well as in September. However, according to Czech's *Kalendarium*, no homicidal gassing took place during the latter half of May, and in June the appr. 7,000¹⁷² Jews allegedly killed were gassed in the so-called Bunker 1.¹⁷³ For July and September, Czech indicates no location for the alleged gassings,¹⁷⁴ but uses only the standard formula "the [...] remaining

¹⁶⁹ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 27.

¹⁷⁰ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 80. F. Müller mentions neither the precise date nor the number of those allegedly gassed.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 83.

¹⁷² This figure includes an alleged transport of Jews from Ilkenau of unknown size, said to have been gassed in its entirety. I have given it the size of two other, similar transports, but which allegedly arrived from Sosnowitz: 2,000 persons.

¹⁷³ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), pp. 213-239.

¹⁷⁴ The only exception is the transport of Jews from Slovakia on July 4, for which D. Czech mentions the gassing of 628 persons "in the Bunkers." D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), p. 243.

deportees are killed in the gas chambers,” with the “gas chambers” referring to “Bunkers” 1 and 2.

Müller claims that the alleged gas chamber of crematorium I had served “from the very beginning only as a reserve installation for the two extermination facilities set up at Birkenau,”¹⁷⁵ i.e., for the so-called “Bunkers.”

However, from the standpoint of official historiography, the “Bunkers” did not need to make use of any reserve capacity, because the highest average daily rate of those claimed to have been gassed – for the month of August – was less than 1,200 per day in the two “Bunkers,” whereas Czech’s *Kalendarium* lists 2,000 people as having been gassed on two occasions – on June 17 and 20, 1942 – “in Bunker No. 1”¹⁷⁶ alone. Therefore, both “Bunkers” together would have had a gassing capacity of at least 4,000 persons per day, more than three times the average maximum daily load indicated above. What is more, out of the 7,000 allegedly gassed victims mentioned above, 6,000 belonged to transports, for which there exists no document and which, pending proof of the contrary, have to be considered fictitious.¹⁷⁷

Similarly, the assertion that “tens of thousands of Jews [...] were killed and cremated” in the crematorium is refuted categorically by the amount of coke supplied to the crematorium. Between June and December 1942 it received 200.5 tons of coke,¹⁷⁸ sufficient for the cremation of a theoretical maximum number of $(200.5 \div 28 =) 7,160$ corpses.¹⁷⁹ Filip Müller eventually admits that in the crematorium “also the dead who had died in other camp areas were cremated,”¹⁸⁰ i.e., those who had died a “natural” death. Thus it is clear that those 200.5 tons of coke must have been sufficient to burn either the dead from the camp – those registered in the “*Leichenhallenbuch*” – or those allegedly gassed. But the corpses documented come first. The “*Leichenhallenbuch*” for the period of June through December lists 9,399 persons deceased,¹⁸¹ which means that the amount of coke supplied to the crematorium was not even sufficient to burn all the corpses stemming from the camp.¹⁸² It is thus impossible that “tens of thousands” of Jews were “killed and cremated” in crematorium I, as the witness maintains.

With respect to the alleged gas chamber, the witness claims that it possessed “six concealed openings” for the introduction of Zyklon B¹⁸³ and “a big ventilator”¹⁸⁴ installed “on the ceiling” and which was damaged by the alleged fire in the furnace hall in an unspecified manner.¹⁵⁴ But in his deposition at the Auschwitz trial, Müller declared: “The corpses stood in front of the ventilators

¹⁷⁵ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 79.

¹⁷⁶ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), pp. 230 and 232.

¹⁷⁷ C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 138), pp. 34f.

¹⁷⁸ APMO, D-Aul-4, Segregator 22, 22a, List of “Coke and coal for the crematoria in tons,” pp. 2f.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. in this respect my article “The Crematoria Ovens...,” op. cit. (note 42), in particular pp. 392f.

¹⁸⁰ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 72.

¹⁸¹ AGK, NTN, 143, *Leichenhallenbuch*. Analysis by J. Sehn, p. 142.

¹⁸² The corpses left over were buried and later incinerated in the open air at Birkenau.

¹⁸³ F. Müller, op. cit. (note 35), p. 62.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

in the gas chamber, tightly packed,” then, contradicting himself, he added: “There was only one ventilator, the lights were on.” Now if the ventilator or ventilators were installed on the ceiling, how could people stand “in front” of them?

In conclusion, we may say that Müller has woven into a web of actual facts a dense tissue of fibs, which he has presented in a different way each time. The original sin was obviously the literary pretext of justifying his being sent to the crematorium as “punishment.” Then, too, his blatant lies about the gassing of the Slovakian transport and the fire in the crematorium are literary pretexts for introducing the story of the burials, again as a “punishment.” It is no accident that at the Auschwitz trial, fearing that he would be unmasked, he gave up this lie and invented an entirely different story: the corpses were taken to the hole (or to the holes) no longer on account of the nebulous fire (“now the crematorium was, of course, no longer operational”¹⁸⁴), but “because the number of corpses increased rapidly,” i.e., because the capacity of the ovens was insufficient. Because at this trial Müller made his depositions under oath, he either told the truth on this occasion, and thus obviously lied in his other declarations, or else he told the truth in his other declarations, and thus committed perjury at the Auschwitz trial. Whichever way you look at him, he remains a liar.

The Frankfurt tribunal did not take Müller’s account very seriously and declared of it:¹⁸⁵

“The presentation of the witness Müller about the gassing of the Slovakian Jews is not very clear. Moreover, the court knows that at that time gassings no longer took place in the small crematorium, but in the farmhouses that had been adapted for the purpose.”

Summarizing, S. Jankowski and F. Müller, the only – self-styled – survivors of the “Sonderkommando” of crematorium I, have made declarations that are not only historically false and technically nonsensical, but are also mutually contradictory. In particular, one of them affirms that the alleged gas chamber had 6 openings and one ventilator, the other that it had 2 openings and no ventilator (or contradictorily states that it had “ventilators”).

4. Hans Aumeier

SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Aumeier held the post of “1. Schutzhaftlagerführer” (first leader of the protective custody camp) of the Auschwitz camp from February 16, 1942, until August 15, 1943. In October 1943 he was made commander of Vaivara concentration camp in Estonia, and from February 1945 onwards he was in charge of Mysen concentration camp in Norway; in that country he was arrested by the British on June 11, 1945.

In a report written on July 25, 1945, he stated:¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ H. Langbein, op. cit. (note 95), op. cit., p. 884.

“As far as I remember, it was in November or December 1942 that the first gassing of about 50–60 Jewish detainees was undertaken. This took place in the morgue of the crematorium in camp I, under the direction of the camp surgeon, of Untersturmführer Grabener [Grabner], of the L.K.^[187] and a number of medics. I was not present at the time and did not know beforehand that this gassing would take place, either. Towards me, the LK was always very distrustful and taciturn. It was only the next day that the camp surgeon, Grabner, Untersturmführer Hessler [Hössler] Hauptscharführer Schwarz, and I were called to the LK, who informed us that the order of the RFSS has come from RSHA-Berlin that all Jewish detainees unfit for work as well as the sick judged by the doctor as not being fit for work in the future are to be gassed in order to avoid the spread of epidemics. He stated further, that the night before the first detainees had been gassed, but the crematorium had turned out to be too small and could not cope with the cremations, so that in the crematorium^[188] now under construction at Birkenau, gas chambers were being included. [...]

In the period that followed, some 3 or 4 gassings were still carried out in the old crematorium. This always took place in the evening hours. There were 2–3 air shafts in the morgue and 1–2 medics wearing gas masks poured bluegas through them. We ourselves were not allowed to get close, and the Bunker was opened only the following day. As the doctor said, the people had died within 1/2 to 1 M. [minute].”

As I have documented in a separate study,¹⁸⁹ Aumeier thought initial that he should be frank about Auschwitz, but eventually realized that he had to adopt the “truth” of his British interrogators, exactly as happened with Höss. This propagandistic “truth” was shaped to fit the declarations of self-styled eyewitnesses, in particular those interrogated by the English during the preparation of the Belsen trial and those interrogated by the Poles for the Höss trial.

As far as Aumeier’s above declaration is concerned, we must first of all underline the curious coincidence of the date of the first alleged gassing in crematorium I (“in the month of November or December 1942”) with the date given by Jankowski (“in November or December 1942”). As that dating is wrong according to official historiography, the coincidence is unlikely to be an accident.

The alleged Himmler order, other than coming inexplicably late, is also quite mysterious, as he could certainly have ordered detainees unfit for work to be killed, but why would he have ordered them to be gassed at a point when there were as yet no gas chambers at Auschwitz? And gas them with what? With the “bluegas” (*Blaugas*)? Actually, this was not hydrogen cyanide, but simply “fuel gas, a lighting gas, named after its inventor, [a man by the name

¹⁸⁶ PRO, File WO.208/4661. Report by H. Aumeier of July 25, 1945, pp. 5f.

¹⁸⁷ L.K., *Lagerkommandant*, commander of the camp.

¹⁸⁸ German: “*der Krematorium*,” plural article, but singular noun.

¹⁸⁹ C. Mattogno, *The Bunkers of Auschwitz. Black propaganda versus History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005.

of] Blau.”¹⁹⁰ This “bluegas” was poured into the alleged gas chamber not through appropriate openings but through “air shafts.” The number of these air shafts (2–3: but were there 2 or were there 3?) copies, with some wavering, the number given by Jankowski (2 openings). On the other hand, if the number of those allegedly gassed was hardly “about 50–80 Jewish detainees,” it makes no sense to claim that “the crematorium had turned out to be too small and could not cope with the cremations.” This is a rather shaky argument for arranging that alleged gas chambers be built in the crematoria at Birkenau.

Finally, causing the victims to die within 30 seconds or one minute would have been an impossible task, even using considerable quantities of Zyklon B. According to Haber’s rule, a concentration of 1–2 g/m³ (hydrogene cyanide in air) is needed to kill a man in 30–60 seconds, the “immediately lethal” concentration being 0.3 g/m³.¹⁹¹ However, according to a graph prepared by the Degesch Co. for the evaporation and diffusion of hydrogene cyanide, such concentrations are reached after 1.5 or 2.5 hours in the center of a room being gassed. Thus, at the 4 points of introduction of Zyklon B, between a minimum of 1–2 minutes and a maximum of about one hour¹⁹² would have been needed for those concentrations of hydrogen cyanide to be attained.

In total, according to Aumeier, only 4–5 gassings were carried out in crematorium I, and only from November or December 1942 on. Aumeier therefore squarely contradicts Filip Müller’s account as to the period from May to November–December 1942.

5. Rudolf Höss

In the so-called Krakow notes, Rudolf Höss relates that in 1941 political advisers of the Red Army started to arrive who, on the basis of a secret order given by Himmler, were to be executed.¹⁹³

“The first, smaller transports were executed by details taken from normal troops. While [I was] away on a mission, my replacement, Schutzhaft-lagerführer Fritzsche, had used gas for killing. It was the hydrogene cyanide preparation Cyklon B, which was in constant use throughout the camp

¹⁹⁰ Otto Lenz, Ludwig Gaßner, *Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hochgiftigen Stoffen*. issue no. 1: “Blausäure,” Verlagsbuchhandlung von Richard Schoetz, Berlin 1934, p. 15.

¹⁹¹ Cf. C. Mattogno, *Olocausto: Dilettanti allo sbaraglio*. Edizioni di Ar, Padua 1996, pp. 185f. Editor’s note: Executions in U.S. gas chambers using 3,200 ppm (3.8 g/m³) last 10–15 minutes. To achieve death within a minute or faster, large quantities of soluble cyanide salts or liquid hydrogen cyanide have to be ingested. It is virtually impossible to kill within seconds by inhaling gaseous hydrogen cyanide. See Germar Rudolf, *The Rudolf Report*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, pp. 11f., 192–194f. 208–216; cf. Fred A. Leuchter, Robert Faurisson, Germar Rudolf, *The Leuchter Reports. Critical Edition*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005, p. 33.

¹⁹² Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung m.b.H., *Fumigation Chambers for Pest Control*. Erasmus Druck Mainz, 1967, p. 9.

¹⁹³ Martin Broszat (ed.), *Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen des Rudolf Höss*, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich 1981, p. 126.

as a disinfection agent and was readily available. When I returned he informed me about this, and the gas was used again for the next transport.

The gassings were carried out in the prison cells of block 11. I myself, protected by a gas-mask, have witnessed a gassing. In those packed cells, death occurred immediately after [the gas] was thrown in. Some suppressed screams and it was over. I did not fully realize what went on, I was perhaps too occupied with the whole process of people being gassed. I remember more vividly the gassing, a little later, of some 900 Russians in the old crematorium, the use of block 11 would have been too complicated. While the unloading was going on, we simply broke a few holes into the earth and the concrete that constituted the roof of the morgue.

The Russians had to undress in the vestibule and proceeded quietly into the morgue, as they had been told that they would all be deloused there. The whole transport would just fit into that morgue. The door was then locked and the gas dumped in through the openings. I don't know how long this killing process took. But for a while, one could hear this humming sound. Upon introduction, some of them yelled: 'Gas!', then there was a lot of shouting, and they moved toward both doors, which, however, resisted the pressure. It was only several hours later that [the room] was opened and aired out."¹⁹⁴

According to Danuta Czech, this gassing is supposed to have taken place on September 16, 1941,¹⁹⁵ but the only source the Polish historian offers is Höss, which, however, contains no precise indication as to dates. It is certain from the documents,¹⁹⁶ though, that the first transports of Soviet POWs arrived at Auschwitz on October 6, 1941. This fact has been confirmed by Kazimierz Smoleń, ex-detainee of Auschwitz and later director of the Auschwitz Museum.¹⁹⁷ He was interned on July 6, 1940 (ID number 1327), and subsequently assigned to the Political Department, reporting to Maximilian Grabner. In his deposition of December 15, 1947, Smoleń declared:¹⁹⁸

"In early October, the first transports of Russians came to Auschwitz."

Danuta Czech, on the other hand, basing herself on Höss' declarations, claims that 900 Soviet POWs were gassed on September 16, and another 600 on September 3 in the basement of block 11.¹⁹⁹

Höss affirms to have been present in person, wearing a gas mask, at a later gassing of Soviet prisoners in the basement of block 11, but this gassing never took place according to the Auschwitz Museum. Commenting on Höss' assertion in this regard, an official text states:²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁴ "wurde...entlüftet": was aired out.

¹⁹⁵ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), p. 122.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 103-106.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 97f.

¹⁹⁸ Sworn affidavit by K. Smoleń of December 15, 1947. NO-5849, p. 2.

¹⁹⁹ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), p. 117. This is said to be the famous "first gassing" at Auschwitz which, however, has no historical foundation.

²⁰⁰ Jadwiga Bezwinska, Danuta Czech (eds.), *Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*, Staatliches Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, 1997, note 107 on p. 64.

“It has not been possible to ascertain a second gassing of detainees in this block. Even though, here, Höss denies his presence at the first attempted killing by means of gas, he confirms it a few lines further on.”

Thus Höss was either “present” at a gassing that took place in his absence, or else he was “present” at a gassing which never occurred!

Another surprising fact is that the agony of the victims of the first gassing, according to Polish sources, lasted an entire day – so long, in fact, that it was necessary for the SS to drop more Zyklon B into the cells the next day²⁰¹ – whereas in the gassing that Höss claims to have witnessed the deaths of the victims occurred “immediately upon introduction” of the gas. In another passage of his “notes,” Höss writes that in the experiment conducted by Fritzsche – i.e. in the first gassing – the Zyklon B also provoked “the immediate death” of the victims.²⁰²

The description of the gassing in crematorium I provided by Höss is, moreover, childish and nonsensical. The morgue is said to have been chosen as a homicidal gas chamber at the very last minute in a decidedly improvised fashion. It was not equipped with gas-tight doors or with any ventilation,²⁰³ or with openings for the introduction of Zyklon B, which were hastily made as the victims stepped down from the train!

The story of the gassing itself is even less believable. The Soviet prisoners undressed in the “vestibule” of the crematorium, which measured 4.14 by 7 = 28.9 m², and thus could accommodate 30 people at one time. Hence, the Soviet prisoners had to undress in 30 groups. They all “proceeded quietly into the morgue” because the SS had told them that they would be deloused there. In that morgue, however, there were no showers or other fake hygienic installations designed to fool the victims. Yet, nonetheless, the Soviet prisoners filed “quietly” into that room in groups of 30! In the end, there were 900 of them in a space of 78.2 square meters, i.e., some 11 or 12 persons per square meter, but even then they did not suspect anything abnormal. It was only when the Zyklon B was introduced from the openings above that the stupid victims realized they were going to be killed. Only then, Höss tries to tell us, did they try to break down the doors – but how could they do so, wedged, as they were, 11 or 12 of them into the space of a telephone booth? They could hardly have moved an arm.

Finally, “only several hours later [the room...] was opened and aired out.” This means, as we have already seen, that the crematorium, just like block 11, had to be ventilated for a couple of days, but then why was the gassing done in the crematorium?

It is important to note here that Höss never mentions a mechanical ventilation system for the morgue of crematorium I. In the sentence just quoted, he

²⁰¹ Cf. C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 78-80.

²⁰² Martin Broszat (ed.), op. cit. (note 193), p. 159.

²⁰³ In September 1941, the morgue of the crematorium was still equipped with the makeshift ventilation system which the head of construction had installed at the end of February, but which was apparently unknown to Höss.

says “was opened and aired out,” and not “was ventilated and opened” as would have been the case if a mechanical ventilation system had been available. In other words, according to Höss, the doors of the morgue were opened first and then, afterwards, a natural airing by draft took place.

At the March 12, 1947, session of his trial, when questioned about the first homicidal gassings at Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss declared:²⁰⁴

“After the first gassing in block 11 – the building designated as a prison – transports were gassed in the old crematorium, in the so-called morgue. The gassing proceeded as follows: an opening was created in the ceiling, and through it the gas – a crystalline mass – was thrown into the room. I remember only one transport. It comprised 900 POWs who were gassed in this way. From then on, gassing was done outside the camp, in Bunker 1.”

Hence, according to the commander of Auschwitz, the alleged gas chamber of crematorium I, which according to him had only one opening for the introduction of Zyklon B, was used only until the so-called Bunker 1 was said to have been ready, i.e. – according to what was known then – until January 1942.²⁰⁵

6. Pery Broad

Former SS-*Rottenführer* Pery Broad was transferred to Auschwitz on April 8, 1942. He was assigned to the Political Department on June 18, reporting to SS-*Untersturmführer* Maximilian Grabner. Broad was arrested by the British on May 6, 1945, and released in 1947. On July 13, 1945, he drew up a report, which was never registered by any “commission for the investigation of the German war crimes,” and therefore never received any registration number. It thus disappeared completely for around 20 years and then suddenly resurfaced at the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt.

On April 20, 1964, during the 39th session, a certain Hermann Rothmann was questioned and made the following statement: At the end of the war, he worked at the Intelligence Section of the British government. Broad, who was working in the same office as an interpreter, handed him his famous report on Auschwitz in six copies. Rothmann kept one for himself and later handed it over to the Frankfurt tribunal.²⁰⁶

Another witness, Cornelis van het Kaar, likewise employed by the British secret service at the time, declared that in June 1945 Broad had volunteered the story of the Auschwitz camp to him. Van het Kaar asked Broad to write down his experience at Auschwitz, and Broad handed to the British a written

²⁰⁴ AGK, NTN, 105, pp. 110f.

²⁰⁵ D. Czech, “Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau,” in: *Hefte von Auschwitz*, Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu, issue 3, 1960, p. 49.

²⁰⁶ H. Langbein, op. cit. (note 95), op. cit., p. 537.

report around June 15.²⁰⁷ When questioned about the report during the Frankfurt trial, Broad declared:²⁰⁵

"In 1945 I wrote a report on Auschwitz, which I handed to the English in the British camp of Munsterlager. A copy of my report was prepared there. I have leafed through the photocopy presented to me here. Some parts are my text, some parts seem to have been added by others, some parts, too, are wrong. I am surprised that such things are attributed to me."

After having read the report, Broad said:²⁰⁸

"Certain sections I recognize to be my own notes, but not the document in its entirety."

It is certainly true that Broad accepted those parts of the report which speak of the gassings as authentic,²⁰⁸ but it is also true that his situation in the trial increasingly worsened, to the point that during the hearing of November 6, 1964 – having hitherto been present in freedom – he was arrested immediately after the deposition of a certain Ota Fabian, who accused him of having killed various detainees.²⁰⁹ Broad then lodged a motion with the court, in which he claimed to have done nothing of the kind.²¹⁰

Obviously, Broad was trying to mollify the court and had no wish to alienate it by denying the judicially more important parts of his report. It is certain, however, that the report presented to the Frankfurt tribunal, which was later published in its entirety by the Auschwitz Museum,²¹¹ had been manipulated. The strangest aspect is that neither Broad nor the two British agents mentioned above gave a precise date for the report: the date is, in fact, known only because Broad mentioned it in a sworn statement to the British at Minden on December 14, 1945.²¹² In that statement he also quotes two passages of his report (concerning the alleged homicidal gassing in crematorium I at which he claimed to have been present), which on the whole correspond to the text published by the Auschwitz Museum. In a later sworn statement, dated October 20, 1947, Broad describes the alleged gassing. He asserts that in May 1942 SS-*Hauptscharführer* Hössler formed a special SS Kommando that was ordered to close off all roads leading to the crematorium. Broad continues:²¹³

"A few weeks later, the offices of the Political Department, which at the time were located on the lower floor of the sickbay, were cleared in the early morning hours and the personnel confined to barracks. I did not follow this order, but hid in the upper part of the stairwell. From there, I

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 538.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 539.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 528.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 541.

²¹¹ Pery Broad, "KZ-Auschwitz. Erinnerungen eines SS-Mannes der Politischen Abteilung in dem Konzentrationslager Auschwitz," in: *Hefte von Auschwitz*. Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu, 9, 1966, pp. 7-48.

²¹² NI-11937.

²¹³ NI-11984.

could observe the crematorium, which was some 100 m away.^[214] After some time, the high entrance gate that led to the vestibule was opened and a group of some 200 persons was led through by some SS men whose names I do not know. Then the gate was closed again. I could not observe what went on in the yard, because the gate and the enclosure were too high.

Then Untersturmführer Grabner and another SS man whom I do not remember appeared on the roof of the crematorium and gave instructions to the people assembled in the yard, which, however, I could not understand. A few minutes later, two more SS men, wearing gas masks, stepped onto the roof of the crematorium. They opened the 6 aeration traps that were located in the flat roof, opened several tin cans by hitting them with a hammer, poured the contents through the openings, and closed them again. While they did all this, the engine of a truck standing in front of the crematorium was running, probably in order to drown out the screams of the people dying. About 5 minutes later the action was finished, the truck moved away, and the roads were again opened to traffic. These measures were repeated several times in the Auschwitz crematorium during 1942, but I was no longer able to observe them.”

The description of the alleged homicidal gassing is much more detailed in the “Broad Report,” but also very contradictory. There one can read that the Kommando set up by Hössler did not wait “several weeks” before blocking the roads leading to the crematorium, but did so immediately after it had been formed.²¹⁵ The victims were not “a group of some 200 people,” but “300–400 people.” Broad never explains where his observation post was, what his field of view was, and the scenes segue like in a movie.

For example, he describes, with a wealth of details, the unloading of this transport at the old ramp, which was located between Auschwitz and Birkenau, and was certainly not visible from the stairwell of the hospital! Then the scene changes to the victims – Jews – whose appearance Broad describes with much attention; from what they say, he finally learns that they had been operating machines in a factory.²¹⁵ Then they step into the yard of the crematorium and the gate closes on them. At this point, Grabner, with Hössler, climbs up on the roof of the crematorium and gives a speech – the one which Broad, from his post, had not been able to hear, but which he reports faithfully:²¹⁶

“You will now be bathed and disinfested so we will not have any epidemics in the camp. Then you will go to your lodgings, where hot soup is waiting for you, and you will be put to work according to your professions. Take your clothes off here in the yard and put them on the ground in front of you.”

In his previous statement, Broad asserted that he “could not observe what went on in the yard, because the gate and the enclosure were too high,” but in

²¹⁴ The actual distance is 20 meters.

²¹⁵ Pery Broad, op. cit. (note 211), p. 30.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 31.

the “Report” he diligently records the reactions of the victims in the yard: for example “some of them were looking forward to the hot soup” promised by Grabner.²¹⁶ After mentioning a conversation between Grabner and the victims on the subject of the alleged showers in the crematorium, Broad describes the way they entered the morgue of the crematorium, but his story places him among the victims, as if he were one of them:²¹⁶

“The first ones moved through the vestibule into the morgue. Everything is spotless. Only the strange odor strikes a few of them as nauseating. In vain they look at the ceiling, searching for showerheads or water pipes.”

The doors are closed and the victims realize that they are trapped. From his lookout, Broad clearly sees what is happening in the “gas chamber”:²¹⁶

“They pound on the door, hammer it with their fists in their desperate fury. Cynical laughs are the answer they receive.”

With a final effort, Broad manages to hear the reply of the SS:²¹⁶

“‘Don’t scald yourselves when you take your bath,’ someone yells through the door.”

Broad then goes on – as if he were in the “gas chamber” himself:²¹⁶

“Some of them notice that the covers of the six holes in the ceiling are being taken off.”

Then the scene changes to the outside of the crematorium, and Broad describes how the disinfesters pour Zyklon B through the holes in the roof of the crematorium. At that moment, the engine of the truck is started up, but in spite of its roar, Broad again manages to hear the screams of the victims, which after two minutes turn into a subdued moan.²¹⁷ Then, still looking through the walls, he sees the Kommando of detainees at work in the crematorium and observes the corpses as they stand, one leaning against the next, “with their mouths wide open.”²¹⁸

Broad concludes his narrative with the following assertion:²¹⁷

“One transport after another vanished into the Auschwitz crematorium. Every day! There were more and more victims, and the murder had to be organized on a grand scale. The morgue could not take in enough. Cremation of the corpses took too long.”

Therefore the alleged mass extermination was moved to the so-called “Bunkers” of Birkenau.

On March 2, 1946, Pery Broad testified in the Tesch trial and again spoke about the alleged gassing in crematorium I of Auschwitz:²¹⁹

“In July 1942 I was in the neighbourhood of the SS sickbay about 40 to 45 metres^[220] from the Auschwitz crematorium, and there I saw, for the first time, a gassing.”

Thus, he was not inside the building but in its vicinity!

²¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 32f.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 32.

²¹⁹ NI-11954.

²²⁰ The text erroneously has “kilometers”!

Broad went on to say that in the flat roof of the crematorium there were “six holes of the diameter of ten centimeters.”²¹⁹ Hence, the openings for the introduction of Zyklon B had a diameter smaller than the standard size of the Zyklon B cans, which was 15.4 centimeters!²²¹

When asked about the frequency of gassings in the crematorium, Broad replied:²¹⁹

“I cannot say for certain, because I have seen only that one, but I could draw my conclusions about different gassing actions, because a concentration [sic] of several guards would be concentrated by Untersturmführer Hurstler [Hössler] once or twice per month.”

The gassings in the old crematorium thus occurred once or twice per month, but in the “Broad Report” it is said that they took place “every day”! But this is not the end of the stories from this self-styled eyewitness. When questioned about the capacity of the Birkenau crematoria, Broad answered:²¹⁹

“In Crematoriums 1 and 2, 3,000 to 4,000. In crematoriums 3 and 4, 2,000. In No. 5 there was only a gas stove there – 800 to 1200.”

Actually, besides the four crematoria designated II–V, a fifth crematorium never existed at Birkenau, and there was never “a gas stove”! The cremation capacity indicated by the witness is sheer nonsense: for a period of 24 hours, the theoretical maximum cremation capacity was 360 bodies for crematoria II and III, and 192 for crematoria IV and V.²²² With respect to the 3 double-muffle ovens of crematorium I, Broad says only that “4 to 6 corpses at one time”²²³ were cremated there, which is a similar aberration, to say nothing of the “fiery flame several meters high,” which he claimed to have seen coming out regularly from the chimney of the crematorium!²²⁴

When he was asked to make an estimate of the number of those gassed during his tour of duty at Auschwitz, he stated:²¹⁹

“I would think 2½ million to 3 million.”

Pery Broad thus stuck without hesitation to the prosecution’s absurd theses, and it is clear that such a person would have “confessed” to anything in order to please his captors.

Actually, the story of the alleged gassing in crematorium I in May 1942 does not jibe well with the known history of the crematorium. During the second half of May, outside work was carried out at the crematorium: the front yard was fenced in and given two wooden access gates, 4 m wide and 3.20 m high, and the old pavement was replaced.²²⁵

²²¹ The 500-gram can was 12.5 cm high, the 1,500-gram can 31.5 centimeters.

²²² C. Mattogno, “The Crematoria Ovens...,” op. cit. (note 42), pp. 402f.

²²³ Pery Broad, op. cit. (note 211), p. 19.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 20. Cf. in this respect my article “Flames and Smoke from the Chimneys of Crematoria,” TR, 2(1) (2004), pp. 73–78.

²²⁵ “Zentralbauleitung, Auftrag Nr. 436, Arbeitskarte Nr. 20 for Tischlerei” of May 13, 1942: fabrication of two entrance gates (Einfahrtstore) 4×3,20 m, work done between May 21 and 25. RGVA, 502-2-1, p. 24. Description of work done: “Tätigkeitsbericht für den Monat Mai 1942,” RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 299, and “Baubericht für Monat Mai 1942,” RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 261.

Between June 12 and August 8, 1942, the crematorium was one vast work-site engaging hundreds of people – 688 detainees and 123 civilian workers – who demolished the old chimney and built a new with new flues. There was a constant coming and going of trucks bringing in tons and tons of material – 31 tons of refractory brick alone!²²⁶ – and carting off tons and tons of rubble from the old chimney.

There is not the least reference in Pery Broad's account to this feverish activity, which is very telling. No one can seriously believe that under these circumstances, with civilian workers all over the place, even in the furnace hall, the camp SS would have organized one or more homicidal gassings in the crematorium. And that, when at the same time they allegedly had the two gassing "Bunkers" at their disposal, much more spacious and much better shielded from indiscreet observers.

Besides, if we follow Danuta Czech's *Kalendarium*, there was no homicidal gassing during the second half of May²²⁷ of 1942, and only a single one between June 1 and 12 (beginning of the work on the chimney), which, however, is said to have taken place on June 2 in the alleged "Bunker"¹.²²⁸

In conclusion, the "gassing" described by Pery Broad cannot have taken place while the work on the chimneys was going on, or during the two weeks previous, and therefore it never took place.

7. Maximilian Grabner

Maximilian Grabner, initially a detective with the criminal investigation department of the Vienna police, later with the Gestapo at Kattowitz, was transferred to Auschwitz in June 1940 and became head of the Political Department of the camp, with the rank of *SS-Unterscharführer*. In December 1943, he was arrested for unlawful appropriation of inmate property (embezzlement) and sentenced to 12 years imprisonment by an SS tribunal.

According to Pery Broad, who was one of his subordinates, Grabner was the organizer and supervisor of the alleged homicidal gassings in the morgue of the crematorium and should, therefore, have been well informed about them.

He was arrested by the Vienna Gestapo on August 3, 1945.²²⁹ After several days, the police started to question the witnesses against him. One of the first was Hermann Langbein, an ex-detainee of Auschwitz and future historian of the camp, who declared:²³⁰

²²⁶ Handwritten note "*Schornstein-Krematorium. BW 11*" of December 7, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-318, pp. 4f.

²²⁷ The alleged gassing cannot have taken place before May 25, 1942, because that was the completion date of the two entrance gates (*Einfahrtore*) to the crematorium yard, one of which is mentioned by Pery Broad in his account.

²²⁸ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), pp. 213-226.

²²⁹ "*Staatspolizei Wien, Haftbefehl Nr. 1619. Wien, am 3. August 1945.*" GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 12.

²³⁰ Interrogation of Hermann Langbein, Vienna, August 8, 1945. GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 22.

“Of course Grabner was present at the mass gassings of transports that came to Auschwitz. In the course of these transports, some 5,000,000 [sic!] people were gassed.”

On September 1, 1945, Grabner was interrogated. Regarding the beginning of the alleged gassings at Auschwitz, he declared:²³¹

“Starting in early 1942, detainees at Auschwitz were murdered by means of gas; to be precise, it started in block 11. I have myself seen these gassings, the SS was walking around with gas masks, the detainees, 20–40 men [at a time], were herded into the cells. Then the cells were sealed and filled with gas.”

In a declaration dated September 26, 1945, Grabner furnished more details:²³²

“Furthermore, 2,000 Russians – probably partisans – who had been held in block 11 completely isolated from the rest of the camp, were gassed in two groups of 1,000 each.”

In his declaration of September 17, 1947, he asserted that this had been the first experimental gassing.²³³ As we have seen, though, the “first gassing” in the basement of block 11 has no historical foundation. Moreover, if we follow the official historians, only one gassing, not two, was carried out in block 11.

Grabner’s account is fairly unbelievable: he claims that 2,000 Russians were held in the prison cells of the Bunker in block 11. However, the total surface area of the 28 cells in that basement is roughly 238 square meters,²³⁴ which means that the Russians would have been kept in cells holding (2,000÷238=) 8 persons per square meter! Then 1,000 Russians would have been moved out (where?), and the 1,000 remaining would have been gassed in their cells, after making them gas-tight – but then how could the gas have been introduced into the cells?

Grabner goes on to talk about the crematorium of Auschwitz:²³⁵

“Later the gassings were carried out in the old crematorium, across from the SS sickbay. Aside from detainees selected for this purpose, people were brought in by the police, the Gestapo, or the Wehrmacht. Holes were drilled into the concrete ceiling of the bunker,^[236] through which the gas (Ziklon) [sic] was fed in. The bunker had a capacity of 700–800 people. Next to the bunker was the crematorium, in which the dead would be burned immediately. Several times a week there were such gassings. There were detainees working in the old crematorium who had been selected for this detail and who had to help with the gassing. After a while, this detail would itself be gassed and be replaced by new detainees.”

²³¹ Minutes of the declarations of Maximilian Grabner, Vienna, September 1, 1945. GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 26.

²³² Minutes of the declarations of Maximilian Grabner, Vienna, September 26, 1945. APMO, Proces załogi, vol. 53, p. 65.

²³³ APMO, Proces załogi, vol. 53b, p. 358.

²³⁴ C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 2), p. 29.

²³⁵ Minutes..., op. cit. (note 231), p. 26.

²³⁶ This refers to the morgue of the crematorium.

In the declaration of September 12, 1945, Grabner adds:²³⁷

"I declare that in the period of 1941/1942 alone, 300,000 dead were buried at the same time (within a short period of time), because the capacity of the small crematorium was not adequate for the numbers of dead. Long trenches were dug, and those [trenches] filled up with corpses. In connection with the propaganda about Katyn, an order came from Berlin in 1942 to unearth the corpses and to burn them, so as to leave no traces. A kommando of several hundred detainees was assigned to this task; the unearthed corpses had started to rot and were partly decomposed. At the site and all around there was a filthy odor, which made me avoid this place. After this was done, the detainees were gassed."

We would thus be dealing here with the alleged gassing of the "Sonderkommando" in crematorium I in December 1942, about which the alleged perpetrator, Maximilian Grabner, knew practically nothing!

The story of the 300,000 buried corpses has no foundation in fact: not even Rudolf Höss goes that far. He is satisfied with a more modest figure of 107,000 corpses,²³⁸ but this figure, too, is pure fantasy.

The reference to Katyn is completely out of place, because the graves with the remains of the Polish soldiers murdered by the Soviets were discovered by the Germans on April 13, 1943, whereas at Auschwitz the unearthing and burning of the corpses is said to have started on September 21, 1942.²³⁹ It is curious – but only at first glance – that Pery Broad, too, should have adopted the same motive for the exhumation of the corpses in the mass graves:²⁴⁰

"In view of Katyn, one could not take the liberty of having such mass graves, in which the corpses apparently would not decompose and which would, moreover, reappear eventually."

This agreement on an impossible point in two independent testimonies, since it could not stem from the witnesses, demonstrates that it must have come from the interrogators who were questioning them. In other words, here, as in all the concordances and convergences that Robert Jan van Pelt has found in truly independent testimonies, the information simply reflects all the commonplace facets of the propaganda "truth" about Auschwitz that were in circulation at the time.

Let us consider our witness. Maximilian Grabner's description of the first homicidal gassings is generic and volatile and cannot be the fruit of any real and direct experience. One cannot even say that he was reluctant to "confess" – quite the opposite. Even more so than Pery Broad, he prostituted himself in the cause of his accusers, "confessing" the most absurd charges.

In the declaration of November 12, 1945, mentioned above, he affirms that the victims at Auschwitz amounted to "at least 3 million," for the period during which he was the head of the Political Department, i.e., up to the end of

²³⁷ Minutes..., op. cit. (note 231), p. 25.

²³⁸ Martin Broszat (ed.), op. cit. (note 193), p. 161.

²³⁹ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), p. 305.

²⁴⁰ Pery Broad, op. cit. (note 211), p. 27.

1943 alone!²⁴¹ But earlier, in the statement of September 1, 1945, he had gone so far as to say:²⁴²

"While I was in charge of the political department at Auschwitz, some 3–6,000,000 people were murdered in this or a similar fashion."

Grabner's line of defense was decidedly childish: the whole responsibility for the alleged mass extermination was that of the camp commander, Rudolf Höss; he – Grabner – had not only not committed any crime, but he had tried in every way possible to help the detainees and to sabotage the activity of those "bandits" of Auschwitz. His effusive declaration of September 17, 1947, coming at a time when he was in the hands of the Poles, is a tedious account of his alleged good works at Auschwitz.²⁴³ Among these there are some that are so outrageous that it is worthwhile mentioning them here:²⁴⁴

"Of the four crematoria of Birkenau, I have intentionally damaged the two large ones that stood in the forest,^[245] causing them to be shut down for a while. Secretly, I had poured used engine oil into the chimney."

The crematoria IV and V each had two chimneys 16.87 m high. Each chimney was connected to half the installation, i.e., to 4 muffles. The chimneys had no man-holes. They rose above the roof of the crematoria, and their mouths could be reached by means of a ladder consisting of 25 iron steps anchored in the masonry.²⁴⁶ We can see Grabner secretly climbing upon the roof of the crematorium by means of a ladder, with two buckets full of engine oil in his hands, then crawling and coughing his way up the iron steps to the top of the chimney with one of the buckets in one of his hands, pouring the oil into the smoking chimney, climbing down again to repeat the operation on the other chimney and then doing a repeat performance at the other crematorium! And all this to achieve nothing, since oil poured into a chimney simply doesn't do anything to it.

But those were not the only (alleged) deeds of sabotage which Grabner undertook. He goes on to say:²⁴⁴

"Earlier, I had brought the small crematorium^[247] to a standstill. At the point where it meets the stack, I likewise poured a bucket of oil into the air shaft with the result that the first time it cracked and the second time it blew up altogether, including the ovens."

In reality, there was no air shaft in the crematorium. Until the end of 1943, the chimneys and flues of crematorium II, the chimney and the 8-muffle oven of crematorium IV, and, as we have already seen, the chimney of crematorium

²⁴¹ Minutes of the declarations of Maximilian Grabner, Vienna, September 12, 1945. GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 25. In this declaration the figure of 3 million victims appears no less than three times!

²⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 26a.

²⁴³ Minutes of the declarations of Maximilian Grabner, Krakow, September 17, 1947. APMO, *Proces załogi*, vol. 53, pp. 293-332.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

²⁴⁵ Crematoria IV and V, which were the small ones, however.

²⁴⁶ The steps are clearly visible on the photograph of crematorium V published by J.-C. Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 37), p. 419.

²⁴⁷ Crematorium I of Auschwitz.

I did suffer damage – well documented, by the way – but not because of any acts of sabotage, whether by Grabner or anyone else.

No less ridiculous is Grabner's assertion that, had he collaborated in the alleged mass gassings, he would have been granted a special leave of 3–6 weeks in Italy at the expense of the Reich, plus an allowance of 300–600 Reichsmark.²⁴⁸

When it comes to the history of the Auschwitz camp, Grabner's credibility is characterized by the following sentence:²⁴⁹

"1940. The Auschwitz camp is set up as an extermination camp by an order from Berlin."

We have here another example of the propaganda of the period, disguised as truth, together with the figure of 3, or 5, or 6 million victims.

Maximilian Grabner thus not only accepted whole-heartedly the lies of his accusers on the subject of what had happened at Auschwitz, but in a sort of masochistic frenzy added some of his own that were even more blatant. In doing so, he perhaps hoped to avoid being extradicted to Poland. He had, after all, a wife, three small children, and an aging mother. Instead, he became one of the most prominent among the accused in the trial of the camp garrison and was sentenced to death on December 22, 1947.

8. Hans Stark

SS-Unterscharführer Hans Stark served at Auschwitz from Christmas 1940 to November 1942. In June 1941 he joined the Political Department. In the summer of 1942 he was made *Oberscharführer*. On April 23, 1959, he was interrogated by the *Landeskriminalamt* Baden-Württemberg during the preparation of the Frankfurt trial. On that occasion, he declared:²⁵⁰

"As early as the autumn of 1941 gassings were carried out in a room of the small crematorium, the room having been fitted for that purpose. It could take in some 200–250 people, was higher than a normal living room, had no windows, and only one door that had been made [gas] tight and had a lock like the door of an air-raid shelter. There were no pipes or anything, which could have led the detainees to believe they were in a shower-room. In the ceiling, a certain distance apart, there were two openings with a diameter of about 35 centimeters. This room had a flat roof, which caused daylight to enter through these openings. The granular Zyklon B was poured in through the openings. The Zyklon B was stored in the SS sickbay. Who it was that had hit on the idea of using this product for the gassing of people I do not know, but it was rumored among the camp SS personnel that in the fall of 1941 the product had been tried out for the first time for

²⁴⁸ Minutes..., op. cit. (note 243), p. 321.

²⁴⁹ Minutes..., op. cit. (note 232), p. 63.

²⁵⁰ Minutes of interrogation of Hans Stark, Cologne, April 23, 1959. ZStL, ref. AR-Z 37/58 SB6, pp. 947-949.

the gassing of detainees in a cell of block 11. I do not know who had ordered and carried out this test, but it was said that Schutzhaftlagerführer Fritzsch had been present. I do not know any details.

As I have already said, the first gassing was carried out in the small crematorium in the fall of 1941. As with the shootings, I was requested by Grabner to come to the Krema in order to check the number. Initially, I did not know that there was to be a gassing. Near the Krema there were some 200–250 Jewish men, women, and children, babies may have been among them, all ages. Without being able to name any names, I can say that quite a number of SS personnel were present – the camp commander, Schutzhaftlagerführer, several Blockführer, Grabner, and other members of the Political Department.

The Jews were not told anything, they were simply requested to enter the gassing room, the door of which stood open. During that time, the medics prepared the gassing. Earth had been banked up to ceiling level against one of the outside walls of the gassing room so that they could get on top of the room. Once all the Jews were in the room, it was bolted, and the medics poured the Zyklon B into the openings. I do not remember how many cans of Zyklon B were used, but it was more than one. I cannot give the names of the medics. [...]

At a later gassing – still in the autumn of 1941 – I received an order from Grabner to pour Zyklon B into the opening, because only one medic had come, and it was necessary for a gassing to pour Zyklon B into both openings at the same time. This gassing, again, concerned a transport of 200–250 Jews, and again there were men, women, and children, to be precise. As I have already stated, this Zyklon B was granular, and thus it would run down over the people when it was being poured in. They then started to make a terrible noise, for they now knew what was happening to them. I did not look down through the opening because the openings had to be closed immediately once the Zyklon B had been introduced. A few minutes later, it was quiet. After some time, perhaps 10–15 minutes, the gassing room was opened. The dead people lay every which way, it was a dreadful sight. The detainee Kommando of the Krema then took the gassed to the Krema.

On account of my job as head of the registration department, I was thus present at each gassing or shooting. How many people were killed in my presence during that period, I cannot say. I cannot say either, how many gassings were carried out in my presence. It was the same number of persons each time.”

Hans Stark indicated that in the alleged gas chamber only Jews were gassed.²⁵¹

²⁵¹ Ibid., p. 955.

"During the gassings, which, as already indicated, had started as early as the autumn of 1941 and at which I was present, only Jews were gassed; to be precise, they were always new arrivals."

At the Auschwitz trial, Stark comes back to the alleged homicidal gas-sings.²⁵²

"Stark: Grabner told me there would be a transport and I should be ready. The transport had been announced for the evening, some time between 20 and 21 hours, but it arrived only around 22 hours. Then it turned out that those were not people to be registered but people that had been sentenced to death by a court-martial. The commander ordered them to be taken to the small crematorium to be gassed there."

Presiding judge: How many were there?

S: I do not know. There may have been 150 or 200 of them. After all, it was 4 truckloads. It was Jews and Poles.

PJ: Women too?

S: Yes sir, also.

PJ: Children too?

S: No children were coming to Auschwitz in 1941. The lists were compared and once they had been read out, we moved on to the small crematorium.

PJ: What were the detainees told?

S: Nothing, they were already informed.

PJ: Informed about what?

S: That they would be shot. Once all were inside, the man on top who was responsible for the gassing got ready. Usually, two people were needed. But he was alone. He called down that he needed another one. I was the only one who was still standing around in the group of Führers present, the others were busy in the gassing room. So Grabner said: 'Go and help!' I did not move right away. Then the Schutzhaftlagerführer came up and said: 'Get moving!' and the commander said: 'If you do not climb up there, you will be put in with the others.' So I had to go up and help the man above pour."

The alleged first homicidal gassing in crematorium I took place, according to Stark, in October 1941,²⁵³ but that date is at variance with the one given by Czech (September 16, 1941). As far as the alleged gas chamber is concerned, Stark says only that it had "one door that had been made specially tight", but the morgue had two doors.²⁵⁴ He speaks of "two openings with a diameter of about 35 centimeters"—hence they were round—which squarely contradicts Broad's data: 6 square openings 10 by 10 centimeters. The victims were "only Jews," whereas according to Rudolf Höss they were only Soviet prisoners of war.

²⁵² H. Langbein, op. cit. (note 95), pp. 438f.

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 438.

²⁵⁴ Cf. Chapter VI.

The gassing, in which Stark claimed to have directly participated, concerned “200–250 Jews” or, likewise, “150 or 200 [...] Jews and Poles”; the victims were gassed for being Jews and, at the same time, because they were “people that had been sentenced to death by a court-martial.” In this connection, there obviously were no “children,” but then, on the other hand, the victims were “men, women, and children.”

The witness claims to have been present at each gassing in his capacity of “head of the registration department,” his specific task being to check the number of victims, yet he was unable to say anything about the total number of victims of the alleged gassings, or about the number of gassings carried out in his presence!

Stark claims that the gassings had to be carried out by pouring Zyklon B through the two openings at the same time. Why at the same time? Was there any need for this? None at all. We have here, in fact, a simple literary expedient resorted to by Stark in order to introduce the story of his participation in a homicidal gassing against his will, under threat of death from the commander himself. Such cheap shenanigans on the part of the accused enabled him to show a “cooperative” attitude, and were aimed at mollifying the judges. Stark had, in fact, been called as a witness by Erwin Bartel and by Filip Müller, and a full “confession” was for him the only way of getting through the trial with minimum punishment. His strategy, though, did not avail him much: he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ H. Langbein, op. cit. (note 95), op. cit., p. 885. Editor’s note: On Stark’s testimony see also G. Rudolf, “Aus den Akten des Frankfurter Auschwitz-Prozesses, Teil 7,” *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 8(2) (2004), pp. 238–241, here 240f.

Chapter IV: The Historians

1. Danuta Czech

In the second German edition of her Auschwitz *Kalendarium*, Danuta Czech has only two entries for the period between September 1941 and February 1942 relating to alleged homicidal gassings in crematorium I. They are considered highly significant because they pinpoint the first gassing (of Soviet POWs) and the beginning of the gassings of Jews.

The first entry is for September 16, 1941. Danuta Czech writes:²⁵⁶

“900 Russian prisoners of war are killed with gas. The killing by gas takes place in the morgue of the crematorium, because the use of the cellars in block 11 would have been too cumbersome.”

In a note, the Polish writer explains:²⁵⁶

“This probably occurred in September, for Höss writes, in his notes [...]”

Czech then quotes the passage concerning the alleged gassing of 900 Soviet POWs, said to have followed the gassing effected in the basement of block 11, about which Höss declares that he observed it as an “eyewitness,” but which, in the end, the Auschwitz Museum considers never to have taken place. Höss gives no dates for those events, merely placing them in the autumn of 1941. From this vague indication, Danuta Czech – one does not quite know by which hermeneutical stroke of genius – comes up with the precise date of September 16, 1941, even though, as I have explained above, the first Soviet POWs arrived at Auschwitz only in early October.

The second entry concerns the date of February 15, 1942.²⁵⁷

“The first transport of Jews arrives from Beuthen. They have been arrested by the Stapoleitstelle [Gestapo marshalling center] and are destined to be killed at Auschwitz concentration camp. They are unloaded at the platform of the camp railway spur. They have to leave their luggage on the platform. The camp duty squad receives the deportees from Stapo and leads them to the gas chamber located in the camp crematorium. There they are killed with Zyklon B.”

The sources given by Czech are Höss and Broad. However, the first gassing of Jews mentioned by the ex-commander of Auschwitz took place, as he puts it, “probably still in September 1941, but possibly only in January

²⁵⁶ D. Czech, op. cit. (note 86), p. 122.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 174f.

1942”;²⁵⁸ what’s more, that gassing was not carried out in crematorium I, but in “Bunker” I:²⁵⁸

“At the platform, the Jews were received from the Stapo by a duty squad from the camp and then taken, in two sections, by the Schutzhaft-lagerführer to the Bunker, as the extermination unit was called. [...] Near the Bunker, the Jews had to undress. They were told that for delousing they had to enter the rooms so labelled. All rooms, five altogether,^[259] were filled at the same time, the gas-tight doors were screwed shut and the contents of the gas cans dumped into the rooms through special traps.”

As for Broad, we have already seen that he claims to have been present at a single gassing in crematorium I, but according to him this was in July 1942. Thus, from a gassing allegedly carried out in “Bunker 1” at some time between September 1941 and January 1942, and from another gassing claimed to have taken place in crematorium I, but in July of 1942, Czech deduces that this gassing occurred on February 15, 1942, in crematorium I!

This is not really surprising. Such fraudulent methods are typical of Czech. I have demonstrated elsewhere, by what underhanded practices she came up with a fantastic account of the “first gassing” in the basement of block 11 at Auschwitz, when she pieced together fragments of testimonies which are contradictory in all respects.²⁶⁰

2. J.-C. Pressac (1989)

As I have already noted, Jean-Claude Pressac is the first scholar to have tried to bring the story of the gasings in the morgue of crematorium I back into the realm of historiography. In his first work on Auschwitz, he calls this crematorium “a powerful symbol,” because it served two functions: “First, its present role of being the only Auschwitz Krematorium where a gas chamber can be visited,” and, secondly, its historical role as a “test bed” for the gasings and cremations in crematoria II and III. He admits that the documents (known to him at the time) “do not make it possible to formally establish proof of homicidal gassing in its morgue,” and that one therefore has to take into account the testimonies of eyewitnesses.²⁶¹ He examines four witnesses: Alter Fajnzylberg, Filip Müller, Rudolf Höss, and Pery Broad.

As for the first witness, he analyzes the sworn declaration of September 29, 1980, and an excerpt of the deposition of April 16, 1945. The other three witnesses are given only very little space by Pressac.

²⁵⁸ Martin Broszat (ed.), op. cit. (note 193), pp. 159f.

²⁵⁹ According to official historiography, “Bunker 1” had only two rooms.

²⁶⁰ Cf. the section “Danuta Czech’s Historiographic Method,” in: C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 86-88.

²⁶¹ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 37), p. 123.

From Filip Müller's statements he discusses only the detail of the crematorium chimney – round according to the witness, square according to the German documents available then.²⁶² And that is all.

Pressac devotes eight lines to Rudolf Höss. He finds that “two details are unlikely” in his account:²⁶³

“The squeezing of 900 persons in 78,2 m² and the ‘rapid’ drilling of several holes in the ceiling to pour the Zyclon-B. Drilling through 10 to 15 cm of concrete was not a job that could be done on the spur of the moment.”

The French historian explains these improbabilities by saying that “he [Höss] was present without seeing.”²⁶³

In the eleven lines that he dedicates to Pery Broad, Pressac states that “the form and tone of his declaration sound false” and that “its present literary form is visibly coloured by a rather too flagrant Polish patriotism” and finally that “the original manuscript of his declaration is not known,” but this declaration still has to be accepted, because either Broad has adopted “the language of the victor,” as Pierre Vidal-Naquet put it, or his declaration has been “slightly” retouched by the Poles, as Pressac feels.²⁶³ And that is all here as well. Pressac's general comment is as follows:²⁶³

“Whatever criticisms one might level at the accounts of these four witnesses, all affirm one identical fact: homicidal gassing took place in the morgue of Krematorium I. Even if their accounts diverge on the number of holes through which Zyclon-B was poured or on the number of extractors fans, details in fact unlikely to be noted and remembered unless one actually designed or installed them, the utilisation of the morgue for criminal purposes is established.”

This conclusion is incredible: Pressac disregards the mandatory critical analysis of the testimonies for the evaluation of their acceptability, he jettisons the obvious contradictions the testimonies contain, and limits himself to noting a generic agreement on an assumed fact, which actually demonstrates nothing. Such an agreement can also come about on the basis of completely unfounded rumors, such as the “steam chambers” of Treblinka, the “electrocution devices” of Belzec, or the “chlorine chambers” of Sobibór.²⁶⁴ In this particular case, as shown above, the concordance is a purely literary one. The witnesses having simply re-elaborated a literary story made up of pure propaganda in their accounts.

Pressac's conclusions are also at odds with the new historiographical method he prides himself on introducing with his book *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*: a method (ideally) based on documents,

²⁶² Ibid., pp. 126f.

²⁶³ Ibid., p. 128.

²⁶⁴ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?* Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 47-62. C. Mattogno, *Belzec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 9-22.

which was to demonstrate “the complete bankruptcy” of the previous historiography on the Holocaust, as he defines it:²⁶⁵

“A history based for the most part on testimonies, assembled according to the mood of the moment, truncated to fit an arbitrary truth and sprinkled with a few German documents of uneven value and without any connection between them.”

This definition fits perfectly well Pressac’s own historical treatment of the alleged homicidal gassings in crematorium I (but it also applies to the so-called “Bunkers” of Birkenau).

In his second book on Auschwitz, Pressac has tried to remedy this serious gap by presenting more ambitious arguments, seemingly based on documents. I shall deal with the latter in Chapter V.

3. Franciszek Piper

In his paper mentioned above, between the two pages of introduction on the general history of the crematorium, the four pages which contain drawings and photographs, the two pages of quotations from Rudolf Höss’ and Pery Broad’s accounts, Piper leaves precious little space for the essential question of the homicidal gassings in the morgue of crematorium I. He reiterates Danuta Czech’s assertions on the period of activity of the alleged gas chamber (September 1941 through early December 1942) and Filip Müller’s statements on the number of victims (several tens of thousands). Yet, Piper supplies us with noteworthy new details. The first one is:²⁶⁶

“In view of the high temperature inside the building, the camp administration placed an order with the Boos firm for the installation of mechanical extraction fans. These were installed in late February 1941, operating in the oven room, the morgue, and other rooms.”

In a note, the Polish historian refers to Pressac’s book *Les crématoires d’Auschwitz. La machinerie du meurtre en masse*, and adds:²⁶⁷

“Former prisoner Michal Kula was employed in the installations of the fans, APMO, Hoss Trial, vol. 25, pp. 17-18.

Piper continues:²⁶⁸

“After the ‘experimental’ killing by gas of several hundred Russian POWs and ill prisoners, the room previously used as morgue was rebuilt as a gas chamber. The doors leading to the lavatory and the oven room were insulated, and several openings were made in the ceiling slab. Zyklon B was dropped in through these openings.”

In a note, he says:²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 37), p. 264.

²⁶⁶ W. Długoborski, F. Piper (eds.), op. cit. (note 39, Engl.), vol. III, p. 128.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., note 400.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., note 402.

"The openings were made by the prisoner Czesław Sulkowski. APMO, Collection of Testimonies, vol. 74, p. 74. The openings were closed again when Crematorium I was converted into an air-raid shelter. Four openings were reconstructed after the war on the basis of visible traces; according to Broad and Müller, there were six openings. Testimony of former prisoner Adam Zlobnicki, APMO, Collection of Testimonies, vol. 96, p. 60. 'Reminiscences of Pery Broad,' p. 130; Filip Müller, Eyewitness Auschwitz. Three Years in the Gas Chamber (New York, 1979), p. 38. Feinsilber speaks of "two vents," APMO, Höss Trial, vol. 1, p. 14."

The alleged work by Boos is nothing but the installation of the first system of enhanced (but not mechanical)²⁶⁹ ventilation, done towards the end of February 1941. In Chapter V, I will examine Pressac's interpretation, from which F. Piper obtains his information.

Piper's reference to M. Kula's deposition is clearly misleading. Let us look, first of all, at what the witness had to say:²⁷⁰

"In 1942, Höss became interested in the metal workshop, and particularly in the tools of the crime. Of course, he turned to us in the metal workshop. Ordered to do so by him, we fashioned various things, he supervised us personally. All the crematoria were partly constructed by the metal workshop. Only the equipment came from the outside, but the anchoring bars of the ovens, the grids, anything made of steel was done by the metal workshop. This ventilator was worked on by Maliszewski Stefan, Szablewski Stanisław, Stecisko Mieczysław, and by me. We worked until midnight. Before midnight, Höss came to see us, accompanied by Grabner. They had us work in great haste, because the job was not yet done. It was the ventilator for the aeration of the gas chamber; an opening had been made there, into which the ventilator was set to draw out the gas. Before midnight, escorted by SS, we raced to the crematorium with the ventilator, screwed it in and were taken back to the camp by the SS. Along the road to the camp, we met some 300 persons who ran towards the crematorium."

A little earlier, Piper himself asserts of the alleged gassings in the homicidal gas chamber of the crematorium:²⁷¹

"Former prisoner Michal Kula witnessed 300 POWs being herded into the crematorium."

This quotation brings us to September 1941, the month during which gasings of Soviet POWs are claimed to have started in the morgue of crematorium I, but the temporary ventilation device was installed seven months earlier, at the end of February!

Furthermore, this ventilation system, as I have already explained, did not require a ventilator, because it worked thanks to the pressure difference generated by the draft of the crematorium chimney. Besides, Grabner's requisition of June 7, 1941, for the morgue of the crematorium concerned two fans, one

²⁶⁹ Because it did not use ventilators; it worked by means of the chimney draft.

²⁷⁰ Declaration by M. Kula of March 15, 1947. Höss trial, AGK, NTN, 107 (vol. 25), pp. 481f.

²⁷¹ W. Długoborski, F. Piper (eds.), op. cit. (note 39, Engl.), vol. III, p. 129, note 405.

for the air intake, one for the exhaust, not just one, but even this requisition, for the simple reason of chronology, could have had nothing to do with the alleged homicidal gassings.

It follows that the ventilator mentioned by Kula could be used neither for the first nor for the second ventilation system, because Kula's account does not fit the facts. Hence Piper's interpretation is erroneous on two counts, technically and chronologically.

As for the ex-detainee Czesław Sułkowski, Piper refers to an account the latter gave on September 28, 1971, and in which he declared:²⁷²

"Earlier, we had built an oven for the crematorium. I personally did the openings in the ceiling of the morgue where the first Soviet POWs were gassed. I saw those Russians while they were being taken there. They stood in the street, near the Blockführerstube between the present hotel and the crematorium, hundreds of them, all naked, and waited to be gassed. I saw the SS dumping the gas through the openings into the morgue."

Sułkowski worked in the camp as a bricklayer and was, therefore, a member of the bricklayer section of the Construction Office. The normal procedure was for the Construction Office to transmit to the appropriate section of the work shops a numbered order using a special form,²⁷³ which described the work to be done and gave the exact dimensions and, where needed, a sketch. In turn, the work shop section filled out an "labor card," which mentioned the object of the corresponding order with the dates for the beginning and the end of the work. On the back would be listed the consumption of materials.

If the detainee Sułkowski had actually opened up holes in the ceiling of the morgue, he would have had to follow the precise instructions of the corresponding order and of the "labor card," i.e., in this particular case, the number, dimensions, and positions of the openings. But there is no trace of such documents. Not only that, but he himself, who should have been able to clarify this controversial point of official historiography, gave only a very terse account of the alleged work and was not even able to say how many openings he had personally installed.

Thus, his testimony has no value whatsoever.

4. Robert Jan van Pelt

In his work on Auschwitz, over 500 pages long, Robert Jan van Pelt has made no historical analysis of the alleged homicidal gassings in crematorium

²⁷² APMO, Oświadczenia, vol. 74, pp. 6f.

²⁷³ C. Mattogno, *The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Auschwitz. Organization, Responsibilities, Activities*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005, p. 49f. and documents 41-42 on p. 123f.

I. He limits himself to quoting – without any critical observation – the corresponding account by Pery Broad, presenting it as follows:²⁷⁴

“The Broad report, which was of independent origin, corroborated important elements of the picture that had begun to emerge in Sehn’s investigation and added important new descriptions. Perhaps most important was Broad’s recollection of the first gassings in Crematorium I, which was located adjacent to his own office in the barrack that housed the camp’s Political Department.”

As I have established in chapter III, Broad’s “report” is completely unacceptable. Van Pelt even claims that it describes “the first gassings in Crematorium I,” forgetting that Broad had stated that he witnessed only one homicidal gassing, which had taken place in July 1942, whereas the “first” gassings are said to have started in September 1941!

When he writes that the crematorium “was located adjacent to his own office housed in the camp’s Political Department,” van Pelt makes a mistake, because the barrack of the Political Department near the crematorium, designated “BW 86, interrogation barrack of Political Department (near crematorium)” was built between January 9 and 20, 1943,²⁷⁵ and was handed over to the camp command on February 8, 1943,²⁷⁶ at a time when the alleged gassings had officially ended. As we have seen above, the offices of the Political Department, according to Broad, were at that time located on the ground floor of the SS sickbay.

Van Pelt had dealt briefly with the alleged gassing in crematorium I in a previous book, written in collaboration with Deborah Dwork. After having discussed the difficulties the SS had run into with the first alleged gassing in block 11, van Pelt²⁷⁷ gives a fictionalized account of the alleged first gassing in crematorium I:²⁷⁸

“Fritsch remembered that the morgue of the crematorium in the Stammlager had a flat roof; it would be a simple matter to make one or more openings in it. He also knew that, a month or so earlier, the morgue had been equipped with a new and powerful ventilation system. As we have seen, the Political Department had begun to use the morgue as an execution site for those convicted by the Gestapo Summary Court. From the beginning, the executioners had complained about the nauseating smell, because it also served as a morgue for the bodies of inmates who had died. Maximilian Grabner, the chief of the Political Department, had prevailed

²⁷⁴ R.J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 2002, p. 225.

²⁷⁵ *Tätigkeitsbericht des SS-Ustuf. Kirschnek* for the period January 1 to March 31, 1943. RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 60.

²⁷⁶ Documentation concerning “transfer negotiation” (Übergabeverhandlung). RGVA502-2-150, pp. 7-9. Cf. my study on *The Central Construction Office*, op. cit. (note 273), document 13, p. 76.

²⁷⁷ The section of the book devoted to the history of KL Auschwitz was evidently written only by van Pelt.

²⁷⁸ D. Dwork, R. J. van Pelt, *Auschwitz 1270 to the Present*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York-London 1996, p. 293.

on Schlachter to install a more sophisticated ventilation system that not only extracted the foul air but also brought in fresh air from the outside. Fritzscht realized that such a ventilation system could deal with poisonous gas.

Fritzscht's men punched three square portholes through the morgue roof and covered them with tightly fitting wooden lids. The number of 900 Soviets inaugurated the new gas chamber on September 16. 'The entire transport fit exactly in the room,' Höss recalled. 'The doors were closed and the gas poured in through the openings in the roof. How long the process lasted, I don't know, but for quite some time sounds could be heard. As the gas was thrown in some of them yelled: 'Gas' and a tremendous screaming and shoving started toward both doors, but the doors were able to withstand all the force.'

A few hours later the fans were turned on and doors opened."

Van Pelt claims that the morgue of crematorium I had been transformed into a homicidal gas chamber immediately after the alleged first gassing in block 11. He insinuates that SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Karl Fritzscht had had openings for the introduction of Zyklon B inserted in the flat roof of that room, but this is mere conjecture without any documentary foundation, similar to the claim that the Political Department used the morgue for executions.

Van Pelt further affirms that "a month or so earlier, the morgue had been equipped with a new and powerful ventilation system," with reference to Grabner's letter of June 7, 1941. Actually, as we have seen in chapter II, nothing proves that Grabner's request had been fulfilled immediately. On the contrary, the documents say that the first work on the ventilation of crematorium I after that date was carried out between the end of September and the middle of October 1941, hence after the alleged first gassing in crematorium I.

The date of the "first gassing" adopted by van Pelt (September 16, 1941) is taken from Czech's *Kalendarium*, but I have shown in Chapter IV.1. that both the date and the alleged event have no documentary basis and are simply the fruit of a confabulation by the Polish authoress.

The claim that "Fritzscht realized that such a ventilation system could deal with poisonous gas" is another arbitrary assertion without documentary basis, as is the assertion that follows:

"Fritzscht's men punched three square portholes through the morgue roof and covered them with tightly fitting wooden lids."

Here, van Pelt's dilettantish superficiality exceeds all bounds: no document establishes a link between Fritzscht and the alleged openings for the Zyklon B. To be precise, no document speaks of their installation. Van Pelt takes his reference to the "three square portholes" from an essay by Pressac,²⁷⁹ who, however, adduces as proof a photograph²⁸⁰ from 1945! On the other hand, as for

²⁷⁹ J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 209.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., note 64 on p. 243. I shall deal with this question in detail in chapter VI.

the “wooden lids,” van Pelt simply relied on the Polish “reconstruction” of 1946–1947!

Höss’ testimony, as is clear from the critical analysis I have presented in chapter III.5., is absolutely unacceptable, hence completely devoid of historical value. It is also at variance with van Pelt’s own thesis, because the Auschwitz commander affirms that the openings for the Zyklon B were being cut “through the layer of earth and the concrete that constituted the roof of the morgue” while the transport of 900 Soviet POWs was being unloaded, something which Pressac rightly considers highly “unlikely.” Therefore, van Pelt had to rely on the corresponding passage in Höss’ declarations.

Van Pelt’s final sentence, “a few hours later the fans were turned on and doors opened,” is a real masterpiece of mystification, tending to underpin surreptitiously the presence of a “powerful ventilation system” in the morgue that permitted a homicidal gassing without the inconveniences of block 11. Why should it ever have been necessary to wait “a few hours” before opening the doors? There is no reason. Van Pelt says so only because Höss wrote: “it was only several hours later that [the room] was opened and aired out.” By changing the meaning of this sentence, van Pelt wants to establish, underhandedly, an equivalence between Höss’ “*entlüftet*” (aired out), which, as we have seen, clearly refers to a natural ventilation, and “the fans,” thus creating a deceptive “convergence of proof.”

Chapter V: The Alleged Homicidal Gassings in Crematorium I According to Jean-Claude Pressac (1993)

1. The Projects for the Ventilation Equipment of Crematorium I

In this section, we will examine how Jean-Claude Pressac interpreted the documents relating to the equipment for the ventilation of crematorium I. He wrote:²⁸¹

“As Topf had not yet submitted a modified proposal for the ventilation of the crematorium, Schlachter turned to the Friedrich Boos Co. at Bickendorf near Cologne to have a temporary ventilation device installed for the transitional period until the final equipment could be installed by Topf. Boos, at the time, was building a central heating system in the barracks of the SS guards. The company was the only civilian firm then operating within the camp with both the necessary know-how and the material needed for the installation. This unit was installed between February 23 and March 1. No technical data are known, but SS-Rottenführer Pery Broad of the Political Department did leave us a description of what it looked like on the outside: ‘(...) the fat angled metal tube (...) that stuck out from the roof (of the crematorium) and was monotonously humming. (...), that this was the exhaust fan which was supposed to render the air in the morgue breathable, at least to some extent.’”

A few pages further on, Pressac returned to the argument:²⁸²

“When both ovens were in operation – and that was now the case nearly every day – the heat became so great that now hot air would come into the morgue from the furnace hall when the ventilation was switched on – the very opposite of what was desired. In order to prevent this from happening, the ventilation flaps of the morgue had to be shut, with the result that there was no longer any ventilation. With the summer heat it now became almost impossible to spend any time there, for the air was filled with dangerous vapors, and flies as well as other sources of disease were drawn. Grabner reported this ‘scandal’ to the Construction Office, asking ‘in the general interest’ for ventilations to be installed in the morgue, with one fan for aeration and a second one, in suction, for ventilation. The ex-

²⁸¹ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 18. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 193.

²⁸² J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 23. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 197.

haust air was to be fed into the chimney of the ovens (a solution that had already been considered).

This sinister episode has a great significance. It proves that Grabner, by making use of his rank and by the fear which his section caused among the subordinates in the Construction Office, became involved in the affairs of crematorium I. It documents that in the morgue – because it was ventilated mechanically – killings by means of poisonous gas could take place. This becomes apparent for the first time here, because it was being planned not only to ventilate but also to aerate a morgue.”

Finally, Pressac states:²⁸³

“the crematorium disposed of a mechanical ventilation which – as long as it was used exclusively for the ventilation of the morgue – was sufficiently powerful.”

The source for the installation of the ventilation given by Pressac is the weekly report of head of construction Schlachter, mentioned in chapter II.

It is wrong to assume – as I have already explained – that this ventilation was mechanical. That it was put in by the Boos Co. is, on the other hand, a mere assumption by Pressac, unsupported by any evidence.

The quotation from Pery Broad, which Pressac introduces to explain how the ventilation operated, is distorted and truncated: according to the witness, the suction ventilator (exhauster) was not for the furnace hall *and* the morgue, but only for the morgue, because the exhaust fan was supposed “to render the air in the morgue breathable, at least to some extent,”²⁸⁴ something rather obvious, inasmuch as in the furnace room the fresh air feed was made possible by a window²⁸⁵ with bars. As we can see, Pressac – while admitting that the technical details of this device are “not known” – claims to know them better than Pery Broad, to the point of being able to “correct” him.

Furthermore, Pressac truncates the quotation, leaving out the conclusion of Pery Broad’s description: that on the roof of the morgue “there were – in addition to the exhaust fan – six air-holes²⁸⁶ with lids,”²⁸⁷

The reason for that omission is clear: it is too blatantly at variance with Pressac’s assertion that in January 1942 “three rectangular openings were cut into the ceiling of the morgue and equipped in such a way that *the Zyklon B could be introduced*” (my italics).²⁸³

I will return to this question in chapter VI. Here, let it only be said that to open up “aeration holes” in a room having an exhaust fan does not make much sense.

Moreover, Pressac commits a serious methodic error: He claims to explain, with an account referring to a point in time after May 1942, a situation exist-

²⁸³ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 34. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 209.

²⁸⁴ Pery Broad, op. cit. (note 211), p. 19.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 20.

²⁸⁶ In the French translation used by Pressac this term is rendered as “*orifices d’aérage*” (aeration orifices). *Auschwitz vu par les SS*, Edition du Musée d’Etat à Oświęcim, 1974, p. 166.

²⁸⁷ Pery Broad, op. cit. (note 211), p. 20.

ing at the end of February 1941. As we have seen above, Pery Broad was transferred to Auschwitz on April 8, 1942, and assigned to the Political Department on June 18. On the other hand, the structure of the crematorium Broad describes cannot be dated earlier than it stood in June 1942, because it is known that the yard of the crematorium was walled and equipped with an entry gate and an exit gate no earlier than the end of May. Hence, the description given by this witness is later by at least 15 months.

The drawing referred to by Pressac – drawing no. 1434 of July 3, 1942 – confirms Pery Broad's account merely with respect to the "angled metal tube" visible on the roof of the crematorium, but the function Pressac ascribes to it in the legend of the drawing squarely contradicts Pery Broad's statement, because it is said to be "the angled *air exhaust* (furnace and corpse room) installed by the Friedrich Boos Co. of Köln-Bickendorf"²⁸⁸ (my italics). As if by magic, an aerator suddenly becomes a ventilation device.

Pressac understood little or nothing about the malfunctioning of the ventilation mentioned by Grabner in his letter to the SS *Neubauleitung* of June 7, 1941, which we have already examined in chapter II: the warm air did not enter the morgue "from the furnace room," as Pressac affirms, but from the flue of the ovens, which is very clear, because this ventilation was connected to the "discharge channel," i.e., precisely to the flue, and it is likewise obvious that the exhaust air from the morgue reached the chimney along with the smoke from the ovens. Thus, in this respect, too, Pressac misunderstood Grabner's request: Grabner did not request that "the air taken in should then be conveyed to the chimney of the ovens," because this was already being done and was the very cause of the inconvenience. He wanted the waste air to be taken to the chimney by a *special channel* and not by means of the flue. Aside from this, Grabner wanted *two* fans – one for aeration, one for ventilation – simply because, hitherto, there had been none at all. Otherwise he would have requested only one ventilator for the fresh air feed.

The ventilation system set up in the morgue at the end of February 1941 was thus artificial, but not mechanical (unless it was desired to operate by other means than by the chimney draft). It worked in an artificial way on the basis of the draft of the chimney (the low pressure in the flue sucked in the air from the morgue, which was directly connected to it), but for the flue to be linked to the morgue one certainly did not need a company like Boos: ordinary bricklayers supervised by the Topf specialist who had just finished the installation of the second oven could have done the job.

Pressac says that this inconvenience has "a great significance," and he insists that it revealed an explicit homicidal willingness, as "becomes apparent here for the first time, as it was being planned not only to ventilate but also to aerate a morgue." This only shows, however, that he knows next to nothing about ventilation technology. In actual fact, if any ventilation is to function at all, an aeration is indispensable: otherwise there would be no air exchange.

²⁸⁸ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), explanations of document 8 outside of the text.

Thus, the first proposal for a ventilation of the morgues submitted by Topf and specifying 20 exchanges of air per hour insisted that “a source of fresh air has to be provided for in the morgues by means of windows or other openings.”²⁸⁹

It is thus clear that the only novelty in Grabner’s request was that he wanted a mechanical ventilation. From what has been said it becomes evident that the ventilation installed in the morgue at the end of February 1941 could function only as long as the room also had an air intake. Where did this air come from? If we exclude the two doors and the walls,²⁹⁰ there is only the ceiling, which should have had aeration openings in addition to any alleged openings for the introduction of Zyklon B. It is certainly true that thanks to such a ventilation “killings by means of poisonous gas could have taken place,” but during the ventilation it was necessary to leave the aeration and/or Zyklon B feed apertures open, which is exactly the opposite of what is said in the testimony of witnesses on the alleged homicidal gassings.

Finally, when he says that Grabner used his function and the terror it inspired to meddle in the affairs of the crematorium, Pressac makes another serious mistake.²⁹¹ Actually, the Political Department of the camp also functioned as a morgue police unit, thereby supervising by law the cremation of the bodies of detainees who had died²⁹² and their registration in the death records²⁹³ (*Sterbebücher*) kept for this purpose. In keeping with the rules in force for civil morgue practices, the Political Department oversaw the treatment of the ashes of those cremated, which explains the frequent requests for urns from the *SS-Neubauleitung*.²⁹⁴

2. The “First Gassing” and the Wearing Out of the Second Oven.

If we follow Pressac, the “first homicidal gassing” at Auschwitz took place between “December 5 [1941] and the end of the month.”²⁸³ Referring to it, the author explained:²⁸³

“The victims, whose number is somewhere between 550 and 850, were cremated in the two double-muffle ovens of the crematorium over a period

²⁸⁹ Letter of Topf to *SS-Neubauleitung* dated December 9, 1940. RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 136.

²⁹⁰ The two outside walls were covered by the earth embankment which surrounded the building; as for the two internal walls, one separated the morgue from the furnace hall, the other separated it from the room later labeled “*Waschraum*,” (corpse) washing-room.

²⁹¹ As we have seen above, van Pelt has taken over this imbecile idea, writing that Grabner “had prevailed on Schlachter.”

²⁹² Legislation in force specified that cremations had to be authorized by the local police, who also kept a register of all cremations. F. Schumacher, *Die Feuerbestattung*, J. M. Gebhardt’s Verlag, Leipzig 1938, pp. 118f.; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1938, part I, pp. 1000f.

²⁹³ W. Długoborski, F. Piper (eds.), op. cit. (note 39, Engl.), vol. I, pp. 180-184.

²⁹⁴ The first request of this kind known to me is “*Anforderung Nr. 33*” of February 5, 1941, for “*100 Stück Urnenkisten*” (100 pcs. urn boxes). The request is from: “*Politische Abteilung/Krematorium*.” RGVA, 502-2-1, p. 46.

of one to two weeks of intensive work. This caused damage to the second oven.”

Pressac’s source is the “letter of SS-man Grabner of January 31, 1942.”²⁹⁵ The text quoted immediately above reads as if Grabner had written that the corpses of those allegedly gassed had been cremated in the ovens at a rate that had eventually damaged oven no. 2. Actually, Grabner says in this very brief letter:²⁹⁶

“As a Topf & Söhne engineer is presently in this camp for the installation of an oven, maintenance is requested on oven no. 2 in the local crematorium, which is in need of repair.”

Hence, there is nothing that references the damage on oven no. 2 to the alleged cremation of the victims of the alleged gassing. Pressac’s conjecture is furthermore invalidated by the fact that his date for the “first gassing” is arbitrary in every respect and is based on a critical observation of mine demonstrating that Czech’s official interpretation is false!²⁹⁷ In this regard, Dwork and van Pelt explicitly declare that “Pressac’s dating of the first gassing in December 1941 is not substantiated by evidence”²⁹⁸ – but this is true for any dating of the gassing.

Examining the documents shows how artificial Pressac’s interpretation really is. In December 1941, preparations for the installation of the third oven were under way in the crematorium. The Topf & Söhne specialist Mähr worked in the crematorium from November 27 to December 4, pouring the foundation for the third oven and repairing one of the other two,²⁹⁹ and that is why Pressac takes December 5 to be the beginning of the period, during which the gassing is claimed to have taken place. But a specialist from Topf – probably Mähr himself – was also present in the crematorium between December 18 and 26, 1941,³⁰⁰ and the period, during which the cremation of the claimed gassing victims may have taken place, is thus reduced even further.

Ironically, the reality of the alleged “first gassing” is based exclusively on testimony, but none of these accounts states explicitly and exclusively that it took place in December 1941, which is why Dwork and van Pelt reject Pressac’s thesis.

3. The Alleged Homicidal Gassings in Crematorium I

On the subject of the homicidal gassings in the Auschwitz crematorium, Pressac asserted:²⁸³

²⁹⁵ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), note 21 on p. 113.

²⁹⁶ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 77.

²⁹⁷ C. Mattogno, op. cit. (note 1), p. 159; cf. op. cit. (note 2), p. 8.

²⁹⁸ D. Dwork, R. J. van Pelt, op. cit. (note 278), note 46 on p. 412.

²⁹⁹ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 82; APMO, BW 11/1, pp. 4f.

³⁰⁰ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 82.

“Three rectangular openings were made in the ceiling of the morgue and equipped in such a way that the Zyklon B could be introduced. It was poured directly into the room, in which the two doors had previously been made gas-tight. The roar of the engine of a truck parked next to the crematorium drowned out the screams of the agonizing victims. The SS was able to carry out gassings there between January 1942 and the resumption of work on the third oven in May, i.e., over a period of four months. Today it is assumed that only relatively few gassings with poison gas were done in this crematorium, but that their frequency has been exaggerated because they made a deep impression on the direct or indirect witnesses.”

Pressac, in fact, believed that “the third double-muffle oven was assembled in May and handed over at the end of that month”³⁰¹ and justified his assertion as follows:³⁰²

“The dates are not indicated, but are certain because they are based on the following facts:

1) Arrival date of the rail-car containing more steel parts for the third oven (contract No. 41 D 1980): April 30, 1942 (ZAM, 502-1-313)

2) Posting date, May 8, 1942, of first reminder sent by Topf (ZAM, 502-1-327), out of a total of eight, to activate payment for the third oven (the down payment had been made on January 31, 1941)

3) Normal installation time for a double-muffle oven: 15 days, drying time not included (1 month altogether)

4) Report by SS-man Pollock of May 30, 1942, on damage to the chimney of crematorium I that had occurred due to overheating (ZAM, 502-1-312 and 313)”

The dates indicated by Pressac are so “certain” that on April 10, 1942, detainee No. 20,033, the Polish engineer Stefan Swiszcowski, who worked in the Central Construction Office as a draftsman,³⁰³ elaborated an “Inventory map of building Nr. 47a, BW 11 crematorium,” in which the third oven is already present.³⁰⁴ This oven was actually built in March 1942, and work had ended by the 31st of that month, as evidenced by the building schedule plan for March 1942, which lists 100% completion of the addition to the crematorium as of March 31.³⁰⁵ This date is confirmed also by the report on the state of construction dated April 1, 1942.³⁰⁶

Pressac’s error is serious, but his explanation is even more so, because it shows a rather superficial reading of the documents, to say the least.

³⁰¹ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 38. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 210. (Here, however, the translation is wrong: “Only the iron fittings for the third double-muffle furnace were of immediate use”).

³⁰² J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), note 120 on p. 102.

³⁰³ RGVA, 502-1-256, p. 171.

³⁰⁴ “Bestandsplan des Gebäudes Nr. 47a B.W.11. Krematorium.” Drawing No. 1241 of April 10, 1942. 502-2-146, p. 21. Cf. document 4.

³⁰⁵ Baufristenplan of April 15, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-22, p. 11.

³⁰⁶ “Baubericht über den Stand der Bauarbeiten” of April 15, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 320.

Let us start with item 1). The parts of the third oven, including reinforcing steel, were shipped by Topf on October 21, 1941, as part of Central Construction Office order no. 41/1980/1, and arrived at Auschwitz on October 27.³⁰⁷ It is true that on April 16, 1942, some elements of anchor bolts for a double-muffle oven covered by order No. 41/1980/1³⁰⁸ were loaded into a rail-car containing “parts for the triple-muffle ovens,” which was destined for the future crematorium II of Birkenau, as per Central Construction Office order No. 41/2249/1. These anchor bolt, however, did not belong to the third oven at Auschwitz, as Pressac believes, but were for Mauthausen, and were shipped to that camp on September 22,³⁰⁹ as is indisputable from a comparison of the list of these parts³¹⁰ with the Topf shipment list of April 16, 1942. Pressac himself mentions this shipping error³¹¹ but does not understand its significance.

As for item 2), the reminder sent by Topf on May 8 has no relation whatsoever with the installation of the third oven. Not only did Pressac fail to wonder why Topf should have reshipped parts for anchoring the oven, which had already been shipped, he also failed to consider why this reshipment did not appear on any of Topf’s invoices. Actually, Topf’s partial invoice for the third oven, dated December 16, 1941, and approved by Bischoff on December 22, amounted to 7,518.10 Reichsmark.³¹² Based on this invoice, the Central Construction Office authorized a payment order of 3,650 RM on January 7, 1942, in partial payment, which was paid on January 27.³¹³ Topf sent a second partial invoice, likewise backdated to December 16, 1941, which arrived at Auschwitz on May 22, 1942,³¹⁴ for a remainder of 3,868.10 (i.e. the difference between the cost estimate of 7,518.10 RM and the sum of 3,650 RM already paid by the SS administration). The final invoice, also backdated to December 16, 1941, arrived at Auschwitz on July 10, 1942, and amounted to 3,786.10 RM – 82 RM for a rotating disk³¹⁵ having been deducted from the previous partial invoice because the item had not been shipped.³¹⁶ The payment order

³⁰⁷ Topf, *Versandanzeige* (shipping advice) of October 21, 1941, shipment in car no. 43225 Munich (G). RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 104f.

³⁰⁸ Topf, *Versandanzeige* of April 16, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-318, pp. 167-170. The car arrived at Auschwitz not on April 30, but on April 18. Pressac confuses the date at the end of the document – which refers to the verification of the goods in the car against the *Versandanzeige* and to the receiving of these goods by the Department of Materials, as attested by the stamp “*Materialverwaltung Richtigkeit bescheinigt*” – with the arrival date of the car, which was certified by a stamp on the first page of *Versandanzeige* and was initiated by the Bauleiter.

³⁰⁹ Letter from Central Construction Office to Mauthausen camp of September 30, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-280, p. 273.

³¹⁰ *Aufstellung* (list) of ZBL of September 26, 1942. BAK, NS4 Ma/54.

³¹¹ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 52. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 218.

³¹² Topf, *Rechnung* no. 2363 of December 16, 1941. 502-2-23, p. 263-262a.

³¹³ *Abschlagszahlung* (down payment) no. 1 for J.A Topf & Söhne in Erfurt of January 7, 1942. 502-2-23, pp. 262-262a. Pressac erroneously gives the date January 31 as mentioned in Topf’s *Schlussrechnung* (final invoice), which however refers to the day the bank draft no. Z 8005314 issued by the treasury department (*Amtskasse II*) of HHB on January 27 was cashed (by Topf).

³¹⁴ Topf, *Teil-Rechnung* dated December 16, 1941. 502-1-327, pp. 114-114a.

³¹⁵ The rotating disk was a replacement for the rails on which the “coffin introduction carts” ran in the furnace hall of crematorium I.

³¹⁶ Topf, *Schlussrechnung* dated December 16, 1941. 502-1-23, pp. 261-261a.

for the final payment of this amount was authorized by the Central Construction Office on July 17, 1942, and payment went out on July 29.³¹⁷

Item 3) contains accurate information, but Pressac uses it erroneously, because the drying-out of the oven was not done in May 1942, but in March. Finally, item 4) is in all respects irrelevant. SS-*Oberscharführer* Josef Pollock's report of May 30, 1942,³¹⁸ refers exclusively to the crematorium chimney and does not even mention the number of ovens it contained.

This said, let us go on to the alleged homicidal gassings in the Auschwitz crematorium "between January 1942 and [...]". Between January 14 and 21, the inmate metal workshop of the Central Construction Office carried out the repair of three "oven doors"³¹⁹ and of two oven grills.³²⁰

On January 16, the same shop received an order for "redrilling of anchor holes for oven-anchoring" and to "fabricate a frame 50 x 50 according to instructions by fitter." The job was done between January 22 and 24.³²¹ On January 31, as we have already seen, a Topf specialist was certainly present at Auschwitz, who was undoubtedly the "fitter" mentioned above and who therefore worked at the crematorium at least from January 16 onwards,³²² if not earlier.

The repair of the second oven requested by Grabner was carried out on February 4, as is shown by a handwritten note on his previously mentioned letter.³²³ On February 10, the inmate metal workshop worked on the repair of "2 doors for the fire place" and made "4 pcs. angle irons,"³²⁴ which were part of the anchoring structure of the ovens. It is therefore highly likely that the Topf specialist remained on site at least until that date in order to do the repairs that were needed.

As we have already said, the third oven was installed in March. Likewise, on May 14 and 15, there was work in the engine room, and the flue linking the ovens to the chimney was repaired. During the second half of May, external work was done on the crematorium: the yard in front of the crematorium was walled in and equipped with two wooden gates, and the old pavement was replaced. Toward the end of the month, the metal brace of the chimney broke and there was a danger of collapse. It became necessary to demolish and rebuild the chimney.

³¹⁷ ZBL, "Schlussabrechnung über Lieferung und Errichtung eines Einäscherungsofens der Firma J.A. Topf & Söhne," Erfurt, July 17, 1942. (Final account of supply and installation of a cremation furnace) 502-2-23, pp. 258-259a.

³¹⁸ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 64 and 502-1-314, p. 12.

³¹⁹ The term may refer indiscriminately to the doors of the muffles (*Einführungstüren*), or to the ash removal traps (*Ascheentnahmetüren*) or to the doors of the hearths (*Feuertüren*).

³²⁰ *Häftlingsschlosserei, Arbeitskarte* of January 13, 1941, Auftrag Nr. 630. RGVA, 502-2-1, p. 71.

³²¹ *Häftlingsschlosserei, Arbeitskarte* of January 16, 1942, Auftrag. Nr. 651. RGVA, 502-2-1, p. 60.

³²² Pressac asserts that the "engineer" mentioned in Grabner's letter was Kurt Prüfer (J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), p. 35), but the only source of this information is Grabner's letter! (*Ibid.*, note 113 on p. 101). Pressac has deduced Prüfer's presence – not documented anywhere – from the title "Ingenieur" contained in that letter. Actually, Grabner has only conferred an unsuitable designation to the Topf fitter who was working in the crematorium.

³²³ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 77.

³²⁴ *Häftlingsschlosserei, Arbeitskarte* of February 3, 1942, Auftrag Nr. 747. RGVA, 502-2-1, p. 61.

Plainly, there remained precious little time for any homicidal gassings without them being witnessed by many outsiders!

If we accept the reality of gassings, the behavior of the Auschwitz authorities with regard to the ventilation equipment becomes decidedly senseless. What is more, in Pressac's attempt at an explanation, he makes matters even more unreasonable.

On March 15, 1941, SS-*Neubauleitung* ordered the ventilation system proposed by Topf as per the company's cost estimate dated February 24, i.e., two weeks after the installation of the temporary ventilation hook-up in the morgue. The latter, therefore, was only an unsatisfactory stop-gap measure for a normal morgue. The alleged homicidal gassings are said not to have actually started until six months later. Topf shipped the definitive equipment at the end of May 1941, but there is no documentary evidence that it was ever installed. The invoice of May 27, 1943, in fact, is only for 1,884 RM for the equipment itself, but does not include the 596 RM for installation.

In September 1941, we are told, the alleged homicidal gassings started in crematorium I with another temporary makeshift ventilation. In July 1942, with the demolition of the old chimney, this ventilation stopped functioning, but it occurred to no one to install the Topf ventilation equipment in the crematorium, which was rusting away in a warehouse. This happened only on November 27, 1942, on the eve of the cessation of the alleged homicidal gassings in crematorium I, when Central Construction Office suddenly put ventilation back on the agenda. Its installation was declared urgent on November 30:

"The fitter you offered can start immediately with the installation of the ventilation system in the old crematorium at Auschwitz concentration camp."

Pressac had his own way of explaining this oddity in his reference to Bischoff's letter of November 30, 1942:³²⁵

"The sequence of jobs laid out for Prüfer clearly shows the intent to kill, which the SS was harboring at the time: the gassings were to take place in 'Leichenkeller I' of crematorium II as soon as it became available. If, however, there should be a delay in the arrival or the equipment ordered, it was necessary to be able to fall back on the morgue of crematorium I, provided it possessed the definitive ventilation. This equipment had already been supplied and had a capacity of 8,300 m³ of air per hour, with 3,000 m³ per hour for the morgue itself. The latter value was decisive, even though it entailed the disadvantage that the gassings had to be moved back to the main camp, where anyone could witness them. This was exactly the opposite of the original plan, that is to say, to move them to Birkenau, away from the main camp."

But a few pages earlier, Pressac had written:³²⁶

³²⁵ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 38), 61.

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 35. Cf. J.-C. Pressac, R.J. van Pelt op. cit. (note 46), p. 209.

“Because for each gassing the area around the crematorium had to be sealed off with considerable disturbance for the everyday operation of the camp, and because [gassings] were completely impossible whenever civilian workers were active on the site, it was decided, at the end of April, to move the gassings to Birkenau.”

But if the alleged gassings had been transferred to the so-called Bunkers at the end of April 1942 for the express reason that the SS wanted to keep them away from the detainees and the civilian workers, and if they had been conducted there without a hitch for seven months, why should the SS need to bring them back to the main camp at the end of November of that year?

Pressac’s hypothesis is absolutely unreasonable. In this context, it is also quite unclear why the SS should have continued homicidal gassings in crematorium I up to the end of April 1942 if they had set up “Bunker 1” for this purpose, said to have gone into service on March 20.

As for the ventilation equipment, which the SS – Pressac claims – wanted to set up in crematorium I for their homicidal gassings, Pressac makes a serious mistake. If we disregard the fact that the capacity of the fan was 8,600 and not 8,300 m³ of air per hour, his claim that 3,000 m³ were for the morgue has no foundation.

As we have already seen, the cost estimate of December 9, 1940, was based on 10 exchanges of air per hour for the dissecting room and 20 for the morgue. The system was to work with a single fan, no. 450, driven by a motor of 1.5 HP for 6000 m³ of air per hour. The difference in the number of exchanges between the two rooms was due to the diameter of the corresponding ducts, smaller for the dissecting room, larger for the morgue.

The cost estimate of February 3, 1941, has the same specifications for dissecting room and morgue, but includes a separate ventilation for the furnace room, consisting of a fan (no. 300), driven by a motor of 0.75 HP to deliver 3,000 m³ of air per hour.

The cost estimate of February 24 was for a single ventilator for the dissecting room, morgue, and furnace room. The fan was more powerful – no. 550 – and driven by a correspondingly more powerful motor, 3 HP, for 8,600 m³ of air per hour. Of the total volume, 3,000 m³ per hour were assigned to the furnace room, and the remaining 5,600 to the dissecting room and morgue. The reduction of 400 m³ per hour for the total throughput in the two earlier estimates (6,000 m³ per hour) is easily explained: the third estimate took into account a modification of the morgue, done some months before, in which an urn storage room³²⁷ had been walled off. The morgue lost that part of the room located behind the second oven of the crematorium, thereby diminishing the volume of air to be extracted. In practice, the partial capacity of the installation set aside for the dissecting room and morgue remained unchanged – 10 changes of air for the former, and 20 changes for the latter – or, in terms of air

³²⁷ The creation of the *Urnenraum* was announced to Topf by Bischoff in a letter dated January 21, 1941. RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 185.

volume, some 4,500 m³ per hour for the morgue and 1,100 m³ per hour for the dissecting room.

Chapter VI: The Openings for the Introduction of Zyklon B: Material Evidence

1. The Modifications of Crematorium I (1944–1947)

Drawing no. 1241 of crematorium I, dated April 10, 1942, shows a morgue (17.60×4.60 m), a “washing room” (4.17×4.60 m) and a “laying-out room” (4.10×4.60 m).³²⁸

According to official historiography, the morgue was transformed into a homicidal gas chamber from September 1941 on by fitting it with two gas-tight doors and breaking an uncertain number of openings for the introduction of Zyklon B through its roof. The number of openings testified to was, in fact, one for Rudolf Höss (session of March 12, 1947, of his trial), two for Stanisław Jankowski and for Hans Stark, three for Jean-Claude Pressac, four for the Soviet commission of investigation, and six for Pery Broad and Filip Müller. Last but not least, the worker who allegedly made these openings – the detainee Czesław Sułkowski – who should have been the person best informed about their number, their dimensions, their shape, their structure, and their location – as we have seen in chapter IV.3 – knew nothing about any of these.

If we follow drawing No. 4287, dated September 21, 1944 (see doc. 5), the transformation of the crematorium into an air-raid shelter involved splitting up the morgue into four rooms by means of three partitions. In the first room, on the south side, which served as an air lock, a door to the outside was opened up and a small vestibule created (2×2 m). Furthermore, the vestibule, which lay behind the main entrance to the crematorium, was closed off by means of a partition, and the other walls were strengthened, resulting in another air lock (3.87×3.45 m).

According to the letter from Josten already mentioned, “7 pcs. doors gas-tight and fragment-proof”³²⁹ had been foreseen, but Jothann’s cost estimate of November 2, 1944, mentions “6 pcs. simple interior doors.”³³⁰ Actually, for reasons of economy, the camp administration had apparently only three “gas-tight and fragment-proof” doors installed – those of the two air locks (still existing) and the one leading into the furnace room, which until the end of 1993 was leaning against one of the walls of that room. It had probably been removed by the Germans themselves when they changed the layout of the air-

³²⁸ RGVA, 502-2-146, p. 21. Cf. document 4.

³²⁹ RGVA, 502-1-401, p. 34.

³³⁰ RGVA, 502-2-147, p. 12a.

raid shelter at some point in 1944 by walling up the door leading into the former oven room. The six partitions were merely equipped with ordinary doors, the two small cabinets of the toilets received two doors 70 × 200 cm, as is shown by plan no. 4287 and from Josten's letter of August 26, 1944: "2 pcs. single doors 70 by 200 cm."³³¹

But then what happened to the two alleged gas-tight doors of the alleged homicidal gas-chamber? One of them – the one which separated the morgue from the furnace hall – is said to have been dismantled and temporarily replaced by a standard gas-tight air-raid shelter door like the two outer doors. The other, which separated the washing room from the laying-out room, was simply removed and substituted by an ordinary door.³³²

Needless to say, at the liberation of the camp not the slightest trace of the two gas-tight doors of the alleged homicidal gas chamber were found, and not a trace of them exists in the documentation of the Central Construction Office.

Between 1946 and 1947, in an effort to reconstitute the "original state" of the alleged homicidal gas chamber, the Poles demolished not only the three partitions mentioned above, but also the one that separated the morgue from the washing room. In the space thus obtained, they made four openings in the roof – the alleged openings for the introduction of Zyklon B – into which they inserted small wooden casings with lids (see documents 23-25). Today, therefore, the alleged gas chamber of crematorium I is 21.32 m long, i.e., 4.32 m longer than the original room. The Poles also created an opening in the wall linking the morgue with the furnace room (which had been walled up by the SS at some point in 1944), but moved it half a meter out of its original position and gave it a rather crude shape.

2. The Alleged Openings for the Introduction of Zyklon B

2.1. Jean-Claude Pressac's Interpretation

In 1989, J.-C. Pressac published one photograph from a series taken by Stanisław Luczko,³³³ probably in May 1945 (see doc. 18). It shows the flat roof of crematorium I.³³⁴ The French historian gave it the title "Dance on the roof of the old crematorium" and commented on it as follows:³³⁴

"View of the roof of Krematorium I, looking south-north, 1945 (May?). The chimney has not yet been rebuilt. The features of the roof are:
 – *two ventilation chimneys for the furnace room (two-tone with a dark cap)*

³³¹ RGVA, 502-1-401, p. 34.

³³² The present door even has a glass window, see. Doc. 34.

³³³ APMO, sygn. 5149. Cf. document 6.

³³⁴ J.-C. Pressac, op. cit. (note 37), p. 149.

- two other brick chimneys, probably for ventilating the air raid shelter in view of their newly-built appearance
- in addition, on a line parallel to – and to the left of – that on which the two brick chimneys are built, it is possible to see *THREE* places where the former traps for introducing Zyklon-B have been filled in, thus indicating that the morgue had been used as a gas chamber.

Above the stage, dominated by a red star with the hammer and sickle, fly the flags of Poland (left) and the Soviet Union (right), with lamps mounted above them.

This photograph proves that a dance was organized in 1945 on the roof of Krematorium I, and that people actually danced above the homicidal gas chamber. This episode appears almost unbelievable and sadly regrettable, and the motives for it are not known. This photo also proves that the present covering of roofing felt and the zinc surround of the roof are not original.”

Hence, Pressac undertakes to demonstrate the 1941 creation of three openings in the ceiling of the morgue on the basis of a photograph taken in 1945. Let us look into this question more closely.

The ex-detainee Adam Żłobnicki made the following declaration in a statement given on November 18, 1981:³³⁵

“I remember perfectly well that the openings for the introduction of Zyklon B, which were located on the flat roof of this crematorium, were also remade.^[336] The reconstruction was made easier by the fact that at the locations of the former insertion openings there remained clear traces after the sealing of the former openings with cement. At these very points, the openings were re-established and the little chimneys^[337] were raised. This work, too, was done in 1946–1947.”

The four shafts reconstructed by the Poles are arranged as shown in my drawing (see document 17). They are grouped in two parallel pairs along the internal (A-B) and the external (C-D) walls of the morgue. Shafts C and D are 82 cm from the outer wall, shaft A is 90 cm and shaft B 85 cm from the inner wall. Shafts A-B are 6.30 m and shafts C and D 8.30 m apart from each other respectively. The four shafts thus form the vertices of an irregular parallelogram having a height of 2.40 meters.

What is interesting here is that in the present state of the room shaft D stands 5.10 m from the wall with the entrance from the outside, shaft C stands 7.10 m from the opposite wall, which separated the washing room from the laying-out room, shaft B stands 7.10 m from the wall of the little vestibule near the entrance and shaft A stands 5.10 m from the opposite wall.

Such an arrangement makes sense only within the framework of the *present* state of the morgue. It is, in fact, clear that the position of the shafts was

³³⁵ APMO, Oświadczenia, t. 96, p. 59.

³³⁶ Earlier, the narrator had spoken of the reconstruction of the chimney of crematorium I that was carried out between late 1946 and early 1947.

³³⁷ The small wooden casings set in the ceiling panels of the morgue.

based on their distance from the short, transverse walls of the present room by rationally subdividing the available distance of some 21.3 meters: thus shafts A and D were placed at 5.10 m, shafts B and C at 7.10 m from the nearest wall. The distance for shaft B was, curiously, not based on the rear wall, but on the partition of the little vestibule, and this caused shaft B to be moved back by 2 m with respect to shaft D. But at the time of the alleged original construction of the shafts of the morgue, the little vestibule did not exist, whereas there was at that time a partition between the washing room and the morgue. Thus, this arrangement of the shafts makes sense only for the present state of the crematorium and therefore cannot be original.

If we consider the *original* layout of the morgue (see document 15), the arrangement of the shafts strikes us as most irrational, because while shaft D would still be 5.10 m from the rear wall, shaft B would now be 9.10 m from it, shaft A 0.7 m from the partition of the washing room and shaft C some 2.8 m from the last. The irrationality of this arrangement becomes all the more apparent if we realize that, as a result, the portion of the morgue near the washing room ($8.5 \times 4.60 = 39.1 \text{ m}^2$) would have been equipped with three shafts (A, B, and C), whereas the other portion of equal area would have had only one – shaft D!

Let us now look at the 1945 photograph published by Pressac. The three dark spots (designated 1, 2, and 3 in document 18) are aligned parallel to the two brick ventilation chimneys, the first one of which (the one closest to the camera) is located on top of the morgue. Furthermore, the first dark spot appears to the right of the first chimney (S2 in docs. 16 and 17), whereas in the reconstruction by the Auschwitz Museum the alleged opening for the introduction of Zyklon B closest to this ventilation chimney (“B,” see docs. 15-17) is to its left. If these dark spots were the traces of the alleged Zyklon B introduction openings and if, as the witness Żłobnicki tells us, the present openings were where the traces of the original openings appeared, why was no opening made at the point where dark spot no. 1 can be seen? Inversely, the Auschwitz Museum had an opening made (point “C” in docs. 15-17) at a point where the photograph in question shows no dark spot.

When the crematorium was transformed into an air-raid shelter for the SS sickbay, the work sheet indicated:³³⁸

“Creation of ducts and wall openings for the heating ovens and the ventilation intake and outlet.”

and, more specifically:

“5 pcs. wall openings for devices.”

Today the walls surrounding the morgue show no traces of former openings. What is more, the outside wall was and still is covered by an earth embankment, as is the rear wall as well, with the exception of the narrow passage through this embankment leading to the entrance door. On the other hand, the

³³⁸ “Kostenüberschlag zum Ausbau des alten Krematoriums als Luftschutzbunker für SS-Revier mit einem Operationsraum im K.L. Auschwitz O/S – BW 98 M.” RGVA, 502-2-147, p. 126.

front wall is completely bare and has only one window on the side of the morgue. Finally, the wall between the morgue and the furnace hall shows no traces of openings either, and it would have made no sense, anyway, to pierce it for the installation of stovepipes or ventilators.

Thus it is clear that the five openings mentioned above were created in the ceiling of the rooms that had been turned into an air-raid shelter.

In the ceiling of the morgue, in its present state, there are two rectangular ventilation shafts, one in a corner of the former laying-out room (the later surgery room, marked as S1 in docs. 16 and 17), the other in a corner of the second air-raid shelter room seen from the entrance (S2). Due to their location right at the wall, it is generally assumed that these shafts were added during the transformation of the building into an air-raid shelter.

In addition to these two shafts, one can still distinguish the traces of four *circular* openings that have been crudely walled up.³³⁹ They originally had a diameter of about 35 cm. The corresponding traces are situated (as measured from their centers) at 1 m, 7.2 m, 8.5, and 18.30 m from the rear wall of the morgue (where the entrance is today), and at distances of 1.0 m and 1.4 m from the wall between the morgue and the furnace hall (see docs. 15-17, 19-22).

Because the morgue was 17 m long, the fourth opening is located in the ceiling of the room, in which the corpses were washed until 1943 (the washing room). That is the first proof that those openings had nothing to do with the alleged Zyklon B introduction devices. The second proof is their shape – circular instead of square.

We therefore have six original openings in the ceiling of the rooms under investigation, four of which have been walled up at some point. The document mentioned above, however, refers only to five openings to be added.

From other documents it can be deduced that there must have been a ventilation opening in the ceiling of the morgue when it was actually used to store corpses.³⁴⁰ It can be assumed that opening no. 1 was this ventilation opening, first of all because intelligent design suggests putting a ventilation opening at one end of a long room, and second because the area around opening 1 turned into a vestibule on the building's transformation into an air-raid shelter, for which a ventilation opening was not required.

2.2. The Interpretation by the Holocaust History Project

Of late, three members of the Internet-based Holocaust History Project – Daniel Keren, Jamie McCarthy, and Harry W. Mazal – have considered the photograph published by Pressac with the aim to “correct some common mis-

³³⁹ The left-most room in docs. 15-17, which originally served as a laying-out chamber and in which today the Kori oil-fired oven from the crematorium at Trzebinia is preserved, is not open to tourists. I have therefore been unable to ascertain whether its ceiling shows traces of any further openings.

³⁴⁰ RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 191f., 502-1-312, p. 111.

conceptions about the Crematorium I gas chamber, specifically about the location of the Zyklon holes.”³⁴¹

The authors affirm that there were originally five holes for the introduction of the Zyklon B in the roof of the crematorium, a figure which is at odds with all the testimonies.³⁴² On the photograph in question, they identify the traces of a fourth dark spot in the roofing felt on the roof of the crematorium (see document 18, spot no. 4.),³⁴³ which had obviously escaped J.-C. Pressac’s attention. They then state that four of the alleged five holes for the introduction of Zyklon B, which the Poles had made in the post-war years, were sunk exactly where the aforementioned dark spots were located, and labelled them Z3 [= 3 in my document 18], Z2 [= 2] and Z4 [= 4]; dark spot Z1 [= 1] was not reopened, according to the authors, whereas dark spot Z5, which they place between Z3 and Z2, does, in fact, not appear on the photograph.

The authors claim to have identified the traces of an alleged opening Z1 on the ceiling of the morgue, and provide a photograph³⁴⁴ of it. What we are dealing with here are traces of the opening that I have designated #2 which, however, was not square, as the authors claim, but round, and was actually not at the location of Z1 but 2 m from it toward shaft B (see docs. 15-17, 21).

In any case, the authors themselves deny that the traces of openings #3 and #4 correspond to the dark spots in the photograph published by J.-C. Pressac, because the former have a round shape:³⁴⁵

“At two other locations holes were sealed, but these were circular ventilation openings.”

Dark spot Z1 was located practically on the perpendicular of dark spot Z4, as results from the extension of the respective sides (see doc. 18), and was thus on the prolongation of the axis A-B in front of the present opening D (see documents 15-17). In this area there is no trace of any walled-up opening in the ceiling of the morgue.

Hence, no opening in the roof of the morgue – current or former – corresponds to dark spot Z1. But then, why should dark spots Z2, Z3, and Z4 correspond to openings? As a matter of fact, spot Z2 is too far away from ventilation shaft S2 to be identical with today’s shaft “B,” and spot Z3 is too close to ventilation shaft S1 – probably located over the washing room – to be identical with today’s shaft “A.” Spot Z4, on the other hand, appears to be too far away from the wall to be identical with today’s shaft “D,” which is only 82 cm away from the wall.

The authors claim that, when the crematorium was converted into an air-raid shelter, the alleged Zyklon B introduction openings were sealed again,³⁴⁶

³⁴¹ D. Keren, J. McCarthy, H.W. Mazal, “The Ruins of the Gas Chambers: A Forensic Investigation of Crematoriums at Auschwitz I and Auschwitz-Birkenau,” in: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 9, n. 1, spring 2004, pp. 97-99.

³⁴² Thus, depending on the witnesses and the historians, the number of openings present at the same time was 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6!

³⁴³ Cf. document 18, depression no. 4.

³⁴⁴ D. Keren et al, op. cit. (note 341), figure 31 on p. 92.

³⁴⁵ D. Keren et al, op. cit. (note 341), p. 98.

but this assertion, which they owe to Franciszek Piper,³⁴⁷ has no documentary basis and is disproved by the cost estimate of November 2, 1944, mentioned above, which not only does not speak of any kind of closing up of holes, but specifies the creation of five openings in walls, i.e. in the ceiling, as I have pointed out above. If there would have been holes already in the roof, the SS would have used those instead of weakening the roof even further by adding more holes.

The authors furthermore speak of the chemical proof:³⁴⁸

“As at the other gassing installations in the camp, cyanide compounds can still be detected in the chamber’s walls, as forensic examinations by the Cracow Institute for Forensic Research demonstrate.”

They refer here to an article by Jan Markiewicz, Wojciech Gubała, and Jerzy Łabędź.³⁴⁹ Of the seven brickwork samples taken in the alleged gas chamber (numbers 16-22), three gave negative results (samples 18, 19, and 21), the others showed a maximum content of 292 micrograms (0.292 milligrams) of cyanides per kilogram of material.³⁵⁰

Leaving aside the strange decision by the Polish scientists to exclude Iron Blue (Prussian Blue) from the cyanide compounds to be detected by chemical analysis (which explains the extremely low values they found, as compared to the samples taken by Germar Rudolf and Fred Leuchter), another point on which the Polish chemists can be taken to task is that they did not indicate exactly where they took their samples.

Fred Leuchter has done this. The plan of crematorium I in appendix III of his report³⁵¹ shows the locations in the present morgue, from which he took his 7 samples. One of them, sample no. 28, contained 1.3 milligrams (1300 micrograms) per kilogram of substance, a value of the same order of magnitude as the other samples, except for one of them.³⁵² As opposed, however, to those samples which were taken in the space which originally belonged to the morgue, sample no. 28 – as has already been pointed out by Enrique Aynat³⁵³ – was taken by Leuchter from the wall separating the washing room from the laying-out room, which was not part of the original morgue and thus not part of the alleged gas chamber.

³⁴⁶ D. Keren et al, op. cit. (note 341), p. 97.

³⁴⁷ F. Piper, op. cit. (note 40), p. 177, note 16: “When crematorium I was converted into an air-raid shelter, the openings were bricked up.”

³⁴⁸ D. Keren et al, op. cit. (note 341), p. 97.

³⁴⁹ Jan Markiewicz, Wojciech Gubała, Jerzy Łabędź, “A Study of the Cyanide Compounds Content in the Walls of the Gas Chambers in the former Auschwitz and Birkenau Concentration Camps,” *Z Zagadnień Nauk Sądowych* (Problems of Forensic Sciences), vol. XXX, 1994, pp. 17-27.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, table III on p. 23.

³⁵¹ Fred A. Leuchter, *An Engineering Report on the Alleged Execution Gas Chambers at Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek, Poland*, Samisdat Publishers, Toronto 1988; more recent: F.A. Leuchter et al., op. cit. (note 191), pp. 58, 73f.

³⁵² In order, the values are as follows: 1.9 – 1.3 – 1.4 – 1.3 – 7.9 – 1.1 mg/kg.

³⁵³ E. Aynat, “Neither Trace nor Proof: The Seven Auschwitz ‘Gassing’ Sites According to Jean-Claude Pressac,” *Journal of Historical Review* 11(2) (1991), pp. 177-206, here p. 182.

Therefore, the presence of cyanides in sample no. 28 cannot be explained by homicidal gassings, only either by normal disinfestations or by a limit of the detection method.³⁵⁴ But then why should it not be possible to explain the other traces of cyanide in the morgue as also due to normal disinfestations?

3. Conclusion

The four openings now on the roof of the morgue are not original, and the dark spots which appear on the photograph published by J.-C. Pressac were not traces of openings (as borne out by the fact that no trace of an opening on the ceiling corresponds to any of these dark spots).

Furthermore, sealing any openings in the roof of the crematorium would hardly have left dark spots of such clarity. To level the surface of an opening that has been filled with sand mortar and cement, a simple wooden board larger than the hole itself is enough, but if one had wanted to create such clear dark spots, it would have been necessary to painstakingly scratch out the cement on the surface of the hole filled with mortar. It would have amounted to a form of sabotage on the part of the bricklayer Kommando to leave such obvious traces of the alleged openings. No detainee would have risked that because on the inside, on the ceiling of the morgue, obvious traces of the closure of the holes would have remained apparent anyway.

The detainees of the roofing detail would have had to perform a similar kind of sabotage by shaping the roofing felt to fit exactly the profile of the alleged quadrangular depressions in the cement.

The explanation of the dark spots is much simpler: they were caused by compression of the roofing felt, which had become soft from sunlight, under the weight of a flat and heavy object, such as a cement vase or other decoration for the Soviet-Polish dance frolic – and that explains why the fold in the roofing felt is so marked along the edges, instead of being slightly concave.

The photograph published by Pressac demonstrates that, in the spring of 1945, the Soviets and the Poles believed so strongly in the story of the homicidal gas chamber in crematorium I that they thought nothing of organizing a ball and dancing on its roof!

4. Summary

1) There is no proof that the alleged openings for the introduction of Zyklon B ever existed in the morgue of crematorium I.

2) There is no proof that the morgue was ever equipped with two gas-tight doors.

³⁵⁴ See. G. Rudolf, *op. cit.* (note 191), pp. 253, 258.

3) In contradiction to any kind of logical planning, these alleged doors are said to have later been removed by the SS, when the crematorium was converted to a *gas-tight* air-raid shelter, and replaced by one normal door and one standard gas-tight door.

4) The traces of cyanides present in the walls of the morgue do not prove that the room was used as a homicidal gas chamber.

5) The number of openings made by the Poles after the war (four) is at variance with all available testimonies. This also goes for the figure adopted by the members of the Holocaust History Project (five).

6) The Polish “reconstruction” of both the location of the openings and the structure and dimensions of the Zyklon B introduction shafts has no basis in documents or in witness statements. In fact there are no documents, and no witness has furnished any information on these.

7) There is no proof that the four dark spots visible on the roof of crematorium I in the photograph published by Pressac are traces of former openings that were later sealed; on the contrary, no trace on the ceiling of the morgue corresponds to any of these dark spots.

8) The remaining traces of former openings in the ceiling are round and are no doubt connected to the transformation of the crematorium into an air-raid shelter.

9) The openings created by the Poles make sense, geometrically speaking, only in the context of the present state of the morgue, but are totally asymmetric and irrational when seen in the context of its original state – further proof that they have nothing whatsoever to do with any alleged original openings.

Conclusion

The story of homicidal gassings in the morgue of crematorium I attracted no particular interest from the various underground resistance groups at Auschwitz. They used it only once in their propaganda reports, and rather late at that.

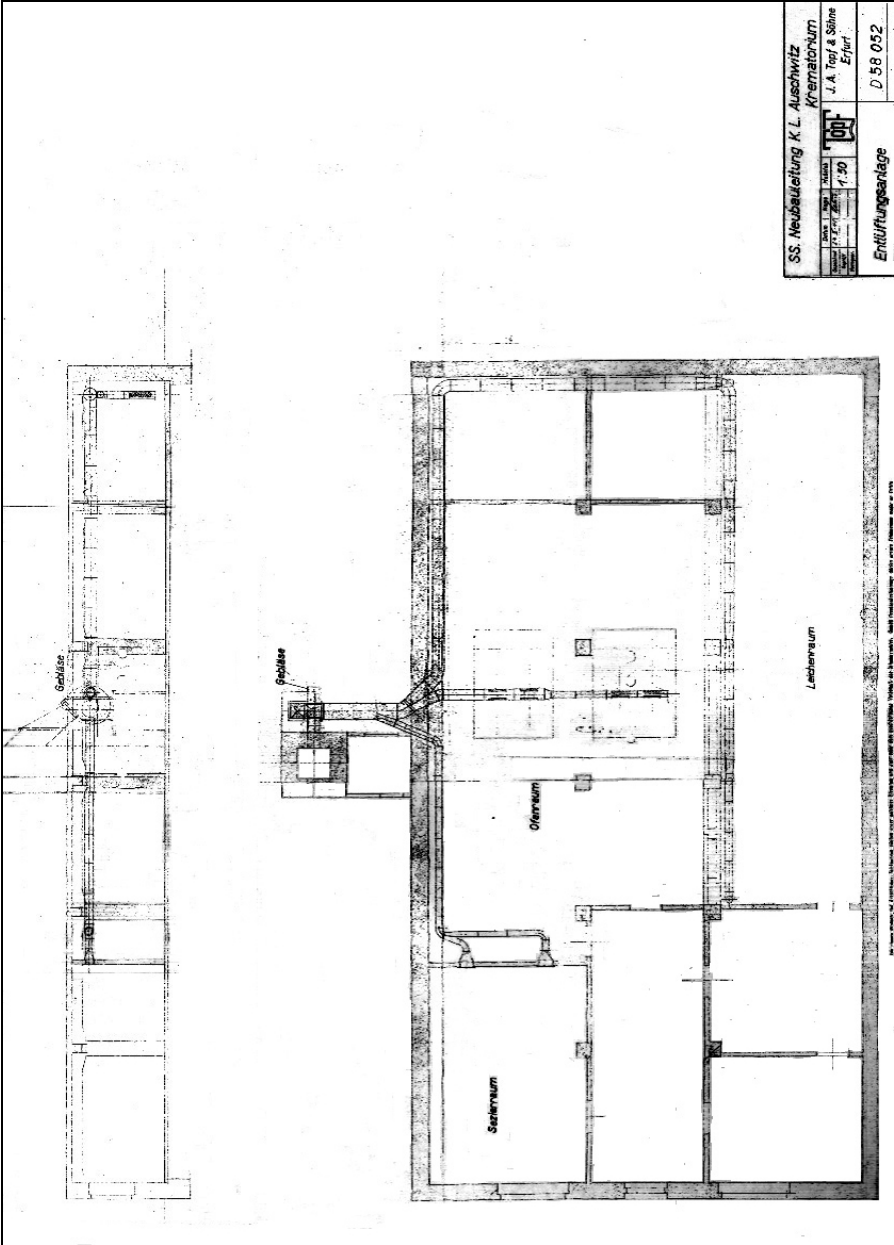
The testimonies on alleged gassings are short and mutually contradictory. The most detailed ones, and thus those that can be checked most easily, are notoriously and demonstrably false. In this category we find, primarily, the accounts by Filip Müller and Pery Broad. Notoriously and demonstrably false is also the claim about the only alleged homicidal gassing, for which we have verifiable data (date, number, nationality, origin, and serial numbers of the victims): the gassing of the so-called “Sonderkommando” of December 1942.

The “reconstructions” by the historians are purely conjectural and fictitious. Having no documentary basis, they rely entirely on “accounts collected at the spur of the moment, adjusted to produce arbitrary truths,” according to the well-known practice, which Pressac ascribes to all previous historiography, but which applies to him as well.

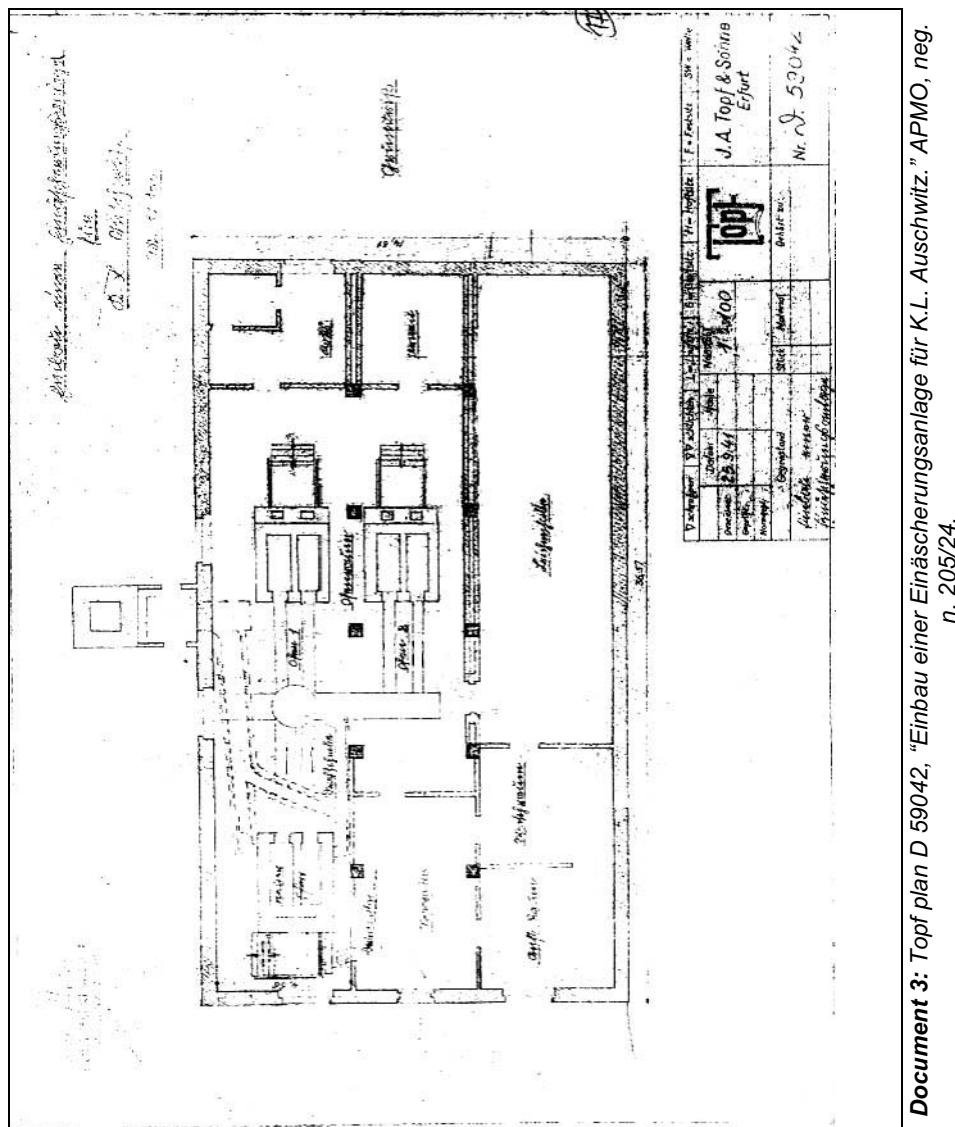
An examination of the archives of *Neubauleitung* (later *Bauleitung* and finally *Zentralbauleitung*, Central Construction Office) of Auschwitz allows us to retrace the history of the ventilation projects for the crematorium elaborated by Topf and to establish with sufficient precision how the various temporary systems installed there were set up and how they worked. Projects and their realizations were carried out in line with the needs of a normal morgue and not a “homicidal gas chamber” as hypothesized without the least documentary evidence.

Finally, an analysis of the alleged Zyklon B introduction openings in the roof of the morgue demonstrates that the openings installed by the Poles in the immediate post-war period are necessarily in keeping with the architectural structure of that era, which was different from the structure the crematorium had in 1942. For this reason they have no relationship with the alleged original openings. In any case, there is no material or documentary trace of the latter.

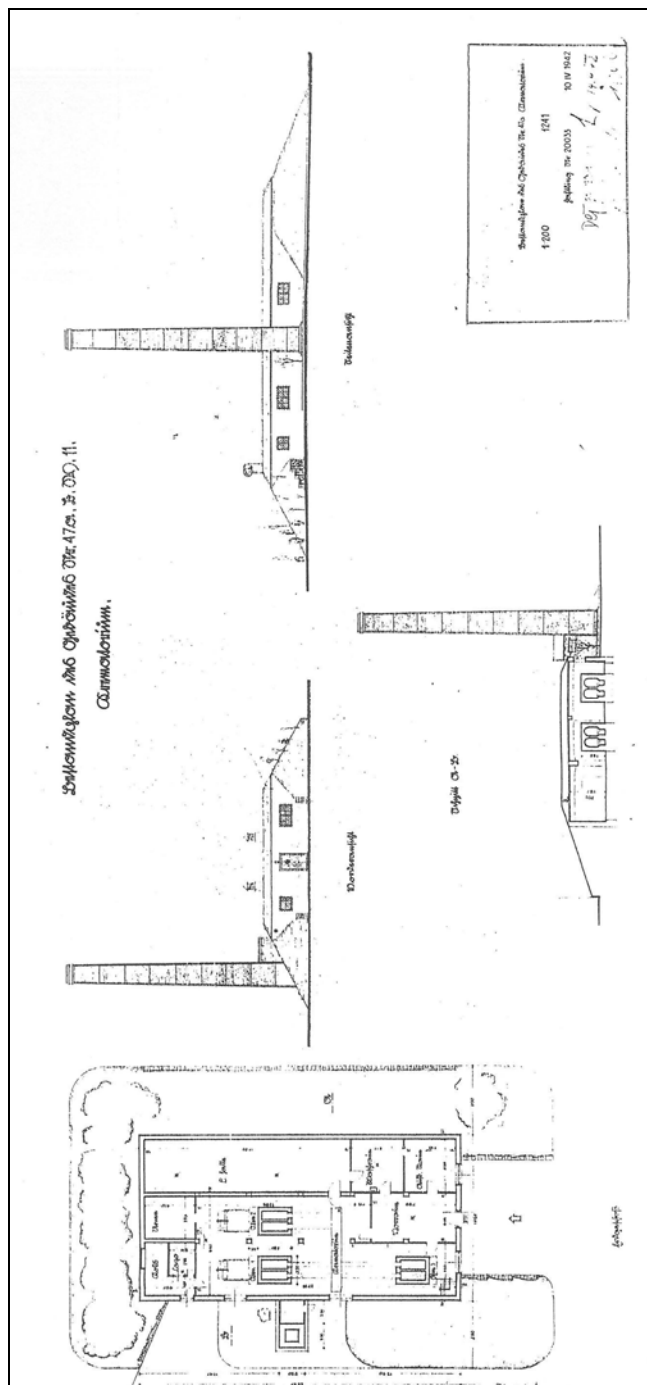
The alleged use of the morgue of crematorium I at Auschwitz as a gas chamber has therefore no historical foundation. It is not history but historical propaganda, laboriously reworked over the decades.



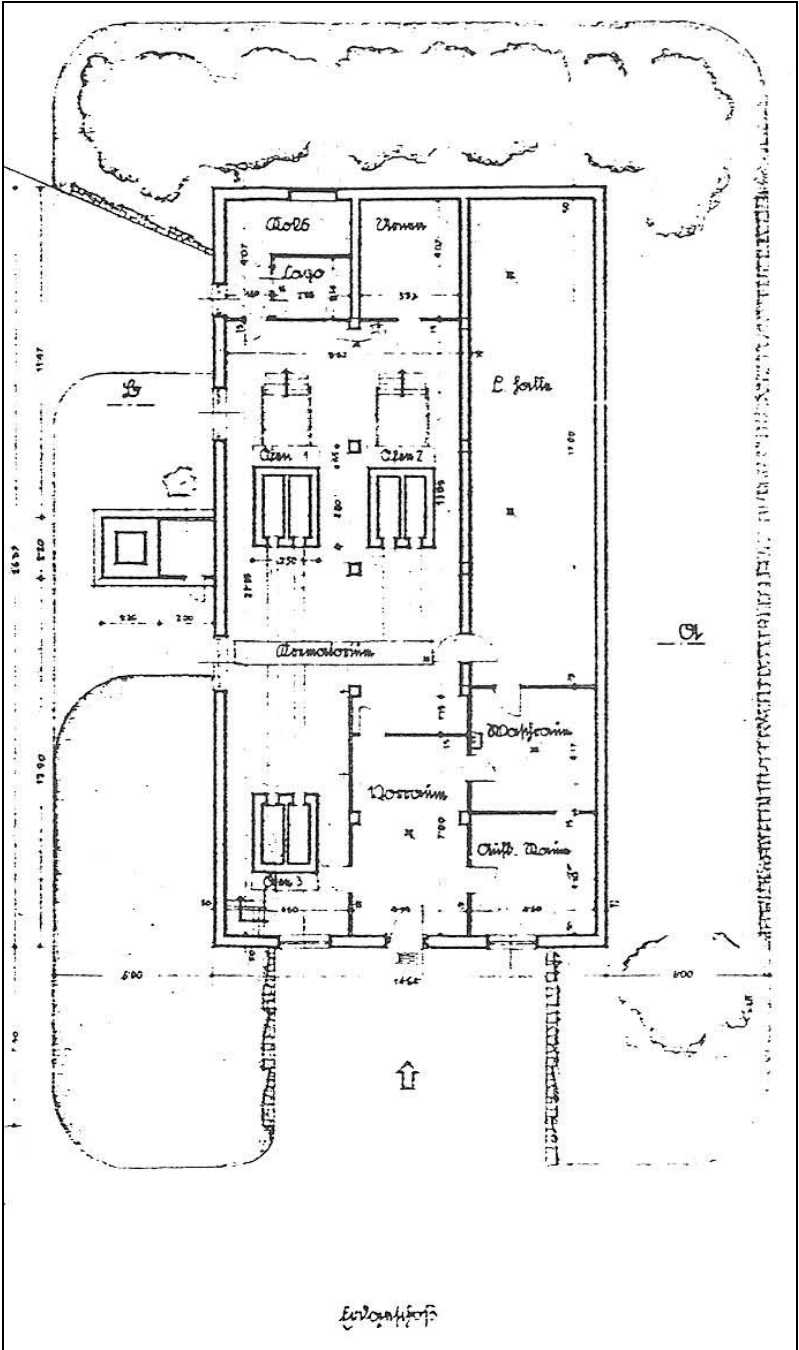
Document 2: Topf plan D 58052, "SS-Neubauleitung, K.L. Auschwitz – Krematorium," dated February 24, 1941.
Third Topf project for ventilation of crematorium. RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 191.



Document 3: Topf plan D 59042, "Einbau einer Einäscherungsanlage für K.L. Auschwitz." APMO, neg. n. 205/24.



Document 4: Bestandplan des Gebäudes Nr. 47a. B.W. 11. Krematorium. Plan Nr. 1241, dated April 10, 1942. RGVA, 502-2-146, p. 21.



Document 4a: Section enlargement of Document 4.

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Document 7: Cost estimate by Topf for "1 Entlüftungs-Anlage für Leichen- und Sezier-Raum, 1 Entlüftungs-Anlage für Ofen-Raum," dated February 3, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 123-126.

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2.	1	Drehstrom-Motor für 220/380 Volt, 50 Perioden, mit Doppelnutanker für geräuscharmen Lauf, für eine Leistung von ca. 0,75 PS bei n = 900/min. Preis RM		123,--
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ANGELEGHEIT Nr.

41/191

HAUSAPPARAT

DATUM:

24.2.1941

Kosten-Anschlag

An den

Reichsführer SS
und Chef der deutschen Polizei,
Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten,
SS-Hauptleitung K.I. Auschwitz-Gewie. in,
A u s c h w i t z

Betrifft: Entlüftungs-Anlage

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Gepreßt:

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2. Blatt des Kostenanschlages vom 24.2.1941

195



für Auschwitz

Lfd. Nr.	Anzahl	Gegenstand der Veranschlagung		
I.	1	<u>Gebläse Nr. 550</u> zur Förderung von stündlich 8600 cbm Abluft gegen eine Gesamtpressung von 30 mm WS bei einer Umdrehungszahl des Schaufelrades von 700/min. und einem Kraftbedarf an der Welle gemessen von 2,6 PS. Das Gebläse besteht aus einem schmiedeeisernen Gehäuse, einem Schaufelrad, welches fliegend auf Motorwellen stumpf aufgebaut wird, und einem Motorständer. RM	210.--	✓
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	1	<u>Druckstutzen</u> zur Verbindung der Ausblasseöffnung des Gebläses mit dem vorhandenen gemauerten Schornstein. RM	36.--	
		RM	1934.--	
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3. Blatt des Kostenanschlages vom 24.2.1941

Top

für A u s c h w i t z

Lfd. Nr.	Anzahl	Gegenstand der Veranschlagung		
II.		<u>Montage der Anlage,</u> wofür wir einen Monteur nach dort entsenden, jedoch ausschliesslich der Hilfskräfte. In den Kosten der Montage sind enthalten die Löhne, Verpflegungs- und Fahrgelder für den Monteur, die Kosten für die leihweise Überlassung des notwendigen Werkzeuges während der Dauer der Montage. RM Im Ubrigen versteht sich der Preis unseres Kostenanschlages ab Werk, ausschliesslich Verpackung. Letztere berechnen wir zu Selbstkosten und nehmen diese nicht zurück. Lieferzeit: ca. 6 Monate nach Auftrags Eingang und Klärstellung aller technischen Einzelheiten.		596.--
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Document 8 continued.

Konzentrationslager Auschwitz
Politische Abteilung

Auschwitz, den 7. Juni 1941.

AZ.: 14 f 5/6.41 / Qu.

Eingang 11. JUNI 1941

Betr.: Entlüftung im Krematorium.
Bez.: Ohne.
Anlg.: Keine.

An die
Neubauleitung des KL.-Au.
über Kommandantur,

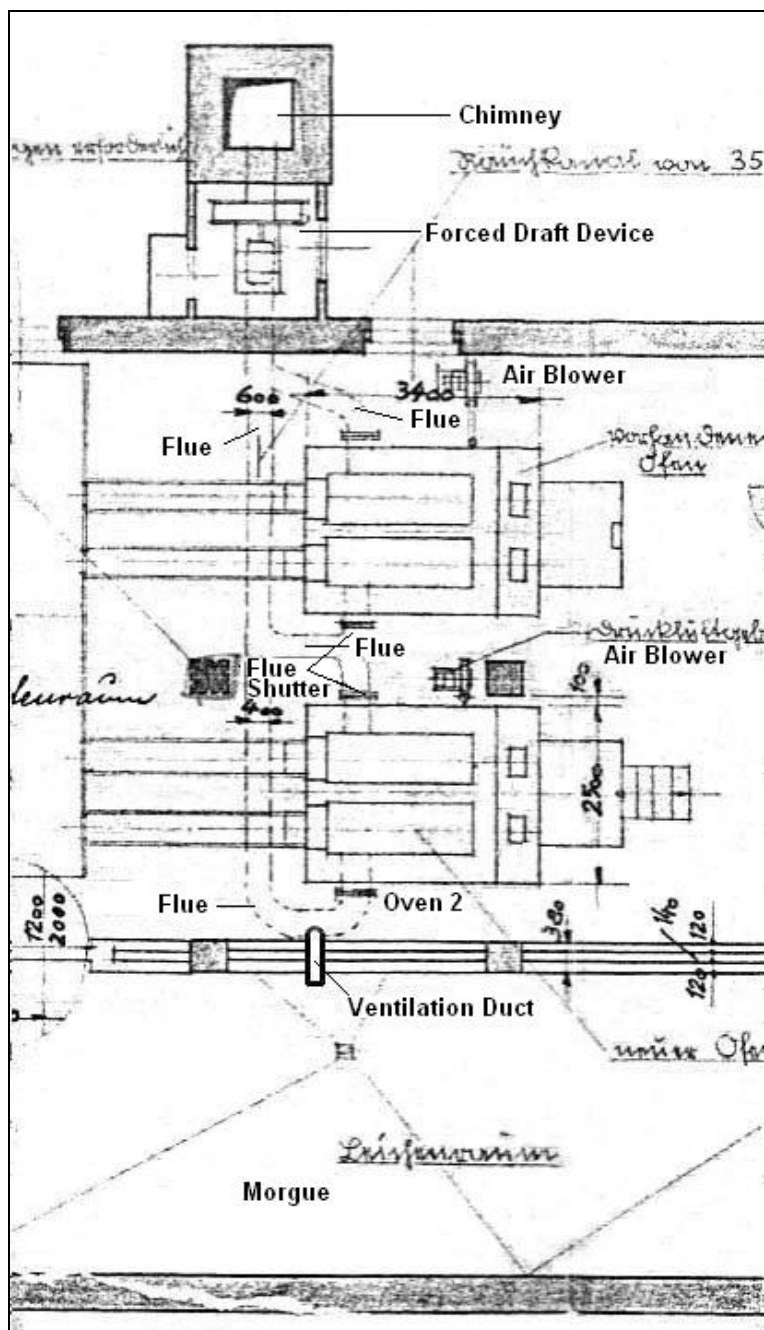
A u s c h w i t z .

Es ist unbedingt notwendig, dass im Leichenraum des Krematoriums eine besondere Entlüftung angebracht wird. Die bisherige Entlüftung ist durch den Einbau des zweiten Ofens wertlos geworden. Wenn der zweite Ofen benutzt wird - und dieses ist jetzt fast täglich der Fall, - muss die Entlüftungs-klappe zum Leichenraum geschlossen werden, weil sonst die warme Luft durch den Fuchs in den Leichenraum eindringt und hierdurch genau das Gegenteil einer Entlüftung bewirkt. Der Mangel der Entlüftung und der Luftzufuhr macht sich besonders bei der jetzigen warmen Witterung bemerkbar. Der Aufenthalt im Leichenraum - wenn dieser auch immer nur für kurze Zeit erforderlich ist, - ist kaum möglich. Durch eine geregelte Ventilation wird sicherlich eine Verbesserung der Luft möglich sein und auch die Feuchtigkeit des Raumes behoben werden. Auch wird der Aufenthalt der Fliegen im Leichenraum unterbunden, bzw. auf ein Mindestmass beschränkt. Die Abschaffung dieser Mängel liegt im Interesse der Allgemeinheit, zumal dadurch auch eine Krankheitsübertragung durch die Fliegen unterbunden wird. Es wird deshalb gebeten, in dem Leichenraum zwei Ventilatoren anzubringen, und zwar je einen zur Be- und Entlüftung. Für die Entlüftung muss ein besonderer Fuchs zum Kamin gebaut werden. Es wird gebeten, die Arbeiten möglichst sofort in Angriff zu nehmen.

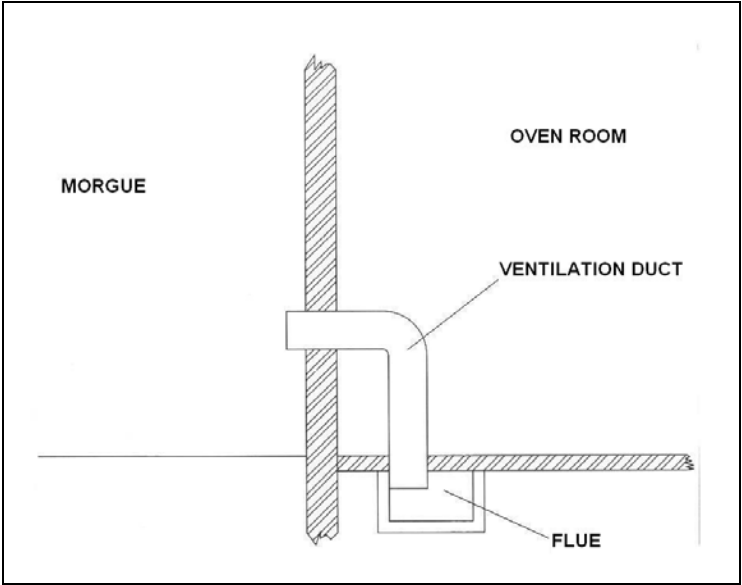
Der Leiter der Politischen Abteilung
SS-Untersturmführer und Krim.-Sekr.

Kommandantur Auschwitz
Eingang: 12 JUL 1941
Nachricht: Hochbau
Legung: Abt. I

Document 9: Letter from SS-Untersturmführer Maximilian Grabner to SS-Neubauleitung, dated June 7, 1941. RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 111.



Document 10: Schematic diagram of first, makeshift ventilation installation for morgue of crematorium I at Auschwitz. Horizontal section of Topf drawing D 57999, dated November 30, 1940.



Document 11: Schematic diagram of first, makeshift ventilation installation for morgue of crematorium I at Auschwitz. Vertical section. © Carlo Mattogno

Materialverbrauch:

Menge	Dim.	Bezeichnung	Ausmass	Bemerkungen
0.8	m ²	Schwarzblech Kg. a. 6.24	5 Z	31.2 Kg
1.6	m	Gasrohr mlt. a. 0.87 M.	1/2"	✓
16	St.	Schrauben 1/4" a. 0.05 M.	3/8" x 25	✓
16	St.	Muttern " " 0.02"	3/8"	✓
8	St.	Unterlegscheiben 0.02"	1/2"	✓
4	St.	Muttern " " 0.03"	1/2"	✓
2	m	Φ-Eisen Kg. a. 0.23 M.	13 Z	2 Kg
		Materialverbrauch	10.74 M.	
		Arbeitslohn	0.40	
		Auftrag-Gehaltszuschüsse	4.20	
			15.34 M.	
		Werkstoffzuschüsse 2.00 M.	3.00	
			18.40 M.	
			Kett.	

7.49
1.39
0.80
0.05
0.80
0.40
0.40
10.74

Erlaubt am: 9. JUN 1941

Kolonnenführer:

[Signature]

Capo: *[Signature]*

//Neubauleitung K. L. Auschwitz
 Häftlings-Schlosserei
 Eingang am 7. Okt. 1941
 Auftrag Nr. 1760
 Dringl.-Grad ✓
Arbeitskarte S.M.M.
 Kolonne Szabelewski
 Gegenstand Anfertigen von 2 Stück Entlüftungs
hüten aus Eisenblech 27/12 cm l.,
sonst nach Angabe
 Antragsteller Krzysztof
 Angefangen: 7. X 1941 Beendet 13. X 1941.

	Nr.	Name	Arbeitszeit	
			Std.	Min.
Schlosser				
Schweisser	1461	Bialos	2	✓
Dreher				
Schmiede				
Klempner	3612	Maliszewski	24	✓
	1409	Dyntar	24	✓
Installateure				
Giesser				

Insgesamt 50 Arbeitsstunden - davon 2 Schweisserstunden.

Document 13: *Inmate locksmith shop, labor card, October 7, 1941, order no. 1760.*
RGVA, 502-2-1, pp. 75,75a.

Der Luftschutzleiter 114/1
 Auschwitz O/S, den 26. August 1944.-
 Az. LS 217 - Jo/B 34
 10 AUG. 1944
 Betrifft: Ausbau des alten Krematoriums für Luftschutzzwecke als örtl. Luftschutzleiter
 Anlagen: 1 Plan.

In der Anlage überreiche ich einen Plan über den Ausbau des alten Krematoriums für Luftschutzzwecke mit der Bitte um Genehmigung dieses Ausbaues.

1. Arbeitsvorgänge:

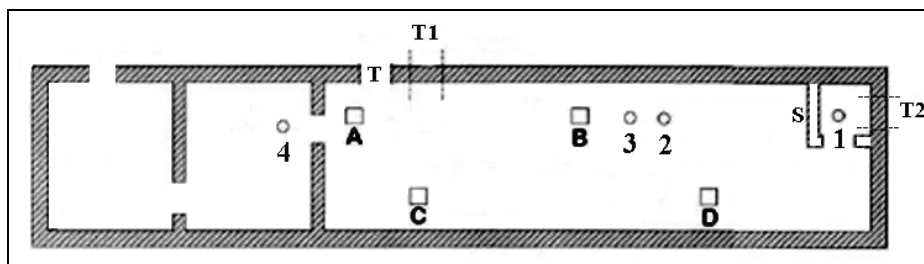
Abbruch der alten Kammeröfen und reinigen der dabei anfallenden Ziegel zwecks Wiederverwendung,
 Auffüllen der Heizschächte und Heizkanäle mit dem beim Abbruch der Kammeröfen anfallendem Schutt und Altmaterial,
 Durchbruch der Fenster- und Türöffnungen,
 Einsetzen der Gasschutztüren, Fensterblenden und Fenster,
 Herstellung der für die Beheizungsöfen, sowie für die Ent- und Beirufung erforderlichen Mauerdurchbrüche und Schläuche,
 Wasserinstallations- und Kanalisationsarbeiten,
 Verlegen der vorhandenen Lichtleitungen entsprechend der Raumeinteilung,
 Ausbesserung der Fußböden und Teilverlegung eines Holzfußbodens,
 Ausbesserung des Daches und Anstrich desselben mit Gudron.

2. Materialbedarf:

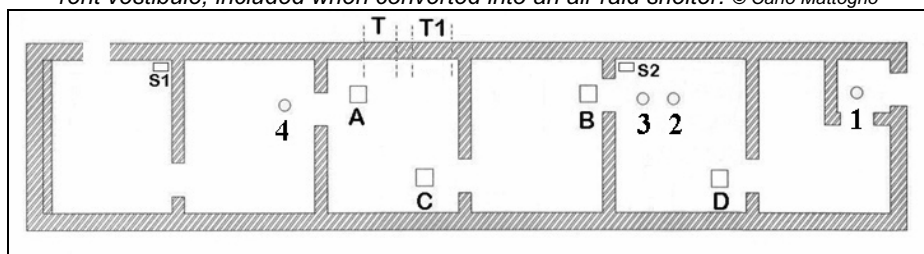
500 kg Zement,
 400 kg Ziegel,
 20 kg Rundeisen,
 50 m Eisenbahnschienen,
 24 St Kanthölzer 10/15 cm, 4,80 m lang,
 10 St Kanthölzer 10/15 cm, 3,90 m lang,
 102 m² Bretter 25 mm stark,
 13 St Fenster einflügelig 60 X 80 cm,
 2 St Türen einflügelig 70 X 200 cm,
 16 St Fensterblenden gas- und splittersicher,
 7 St Türen gas- und splittersicher.

Der Luftschutzleiter:

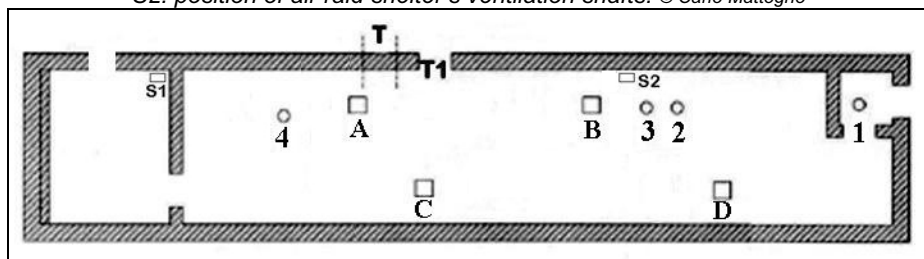
Josten
SS-Obersturmführer



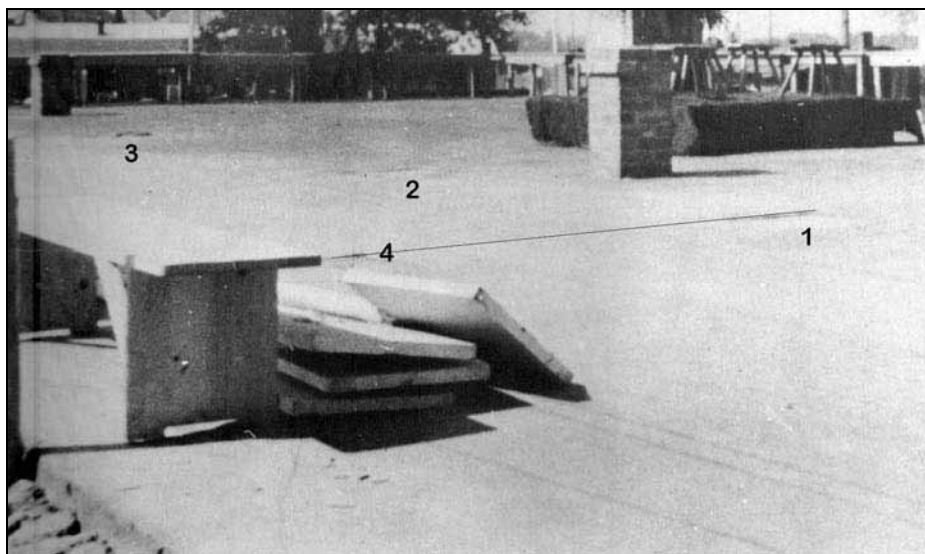
Document 15: Drawing of the morgue of crematorium I with rooms to the left (original state). A,B,C,D: position of current openings in the roof. 1, 2, 3, 4: position of original circular openings, today closed. T: original door to the furnace room; T1: current opening to the furnace room; T2: Current access door from the outside; S: Current vestibule, included when converted into an air raid shelter. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 16: Drawing of the morgue with rooms to the left after conversion to air raid shelter. A,B,C,D: position of current openings in the roof. 1, 2, 3, 4: position of original circular openings, today closed. T: original door to the furnace room. T1: current door (both were closed during the use of this facility as an air raid shelter). S1, S2: position of air raid shelter's ventilation shafts. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 17: Drawing of the morgue with room to the left, current situation. A,B,C,D: position of current openings in the roof. 1, 2, 3, 4: position of original circular openings, today closed. T: original door to the furnace room. T1: current door. S1, S2: position of ventilation shafts. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 18: The roof of crematorium I, photo taken by Stanisław Luczko (probably in May 1945).³³⁴ 1,2,3,4: dark spots on the roof felt. The added line links the left-hand sides of spots no. 1 and 4. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 19: Photo of opening no. 1 in the roof of the vestibule, part of the former morgue. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 20: Photo of opening no. 2 in the roof of the morgue. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 21: Photo of opening no. 3 in the roof of the morgue. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 22: Photo of opening no. 4 in the roof of the. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 23: Photo of the roof of the morgue. All four shafts constructed by the Poles after the war. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 24: Photo of the roof of the morgue. One of the four shafts constructed by the Poles after the war. © Carlo Mattogno

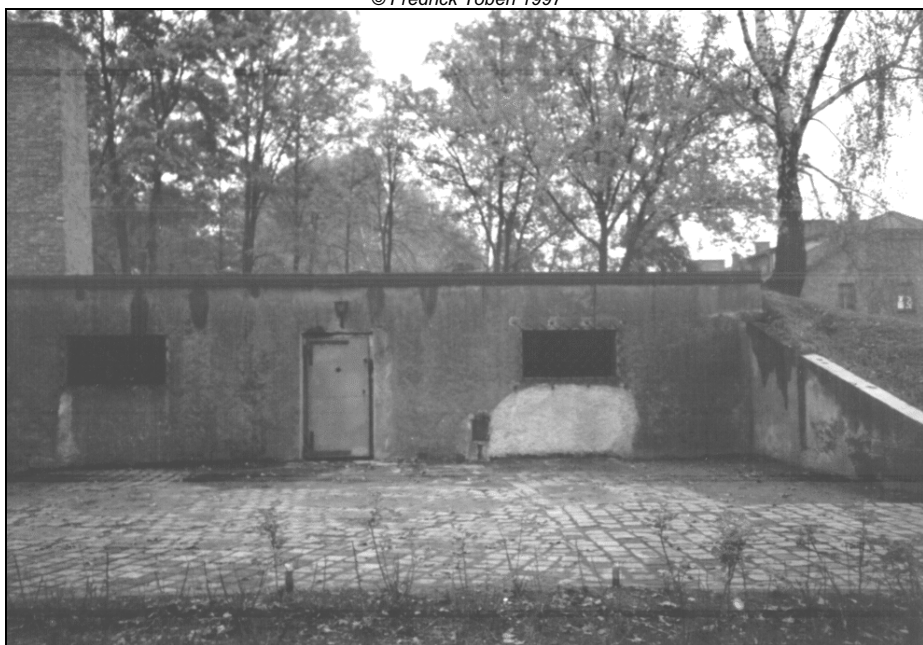


Document 25: Photo of the ceiling of the morgue. One of the four shafts constructed by the Poles after the war. © Carlo Mattogno



Document 26: Auschwitz, old crematorium seen from north-west.

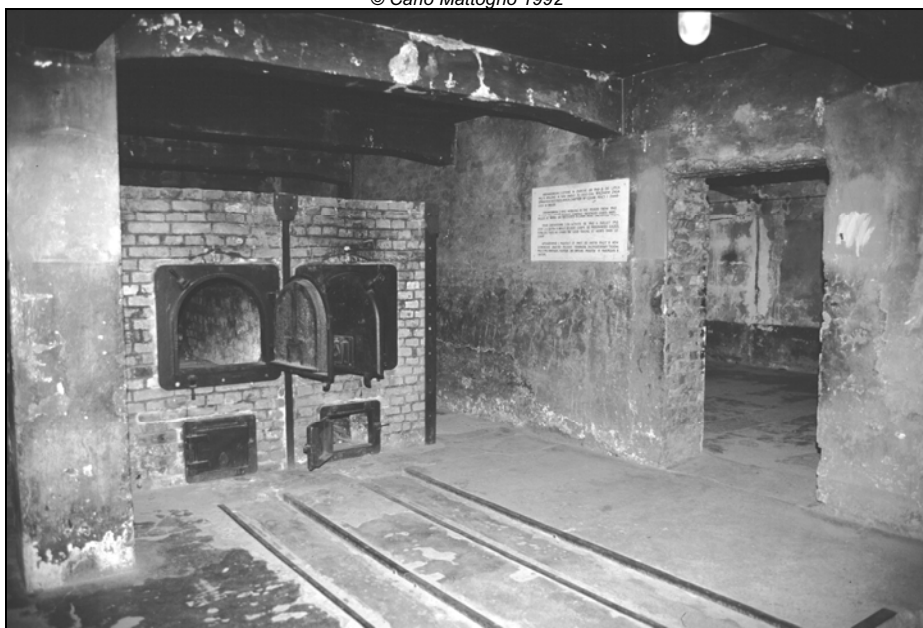
© Fredrick Töben 1997



Document 27: Auschwitz, old crematorium, close-up. © Carlo Mattogno 1991



Document 28: *Auschwitz, old crematorium, interior of the former morgue.*
© Carlo Mattogno 1992



Document 29: *Auschwitz, old crematorium, second cremation oven (reconstructed by the Poles) and current access opening to the former morgue (equally created by the Poles).* © Fredrick Töben 1997



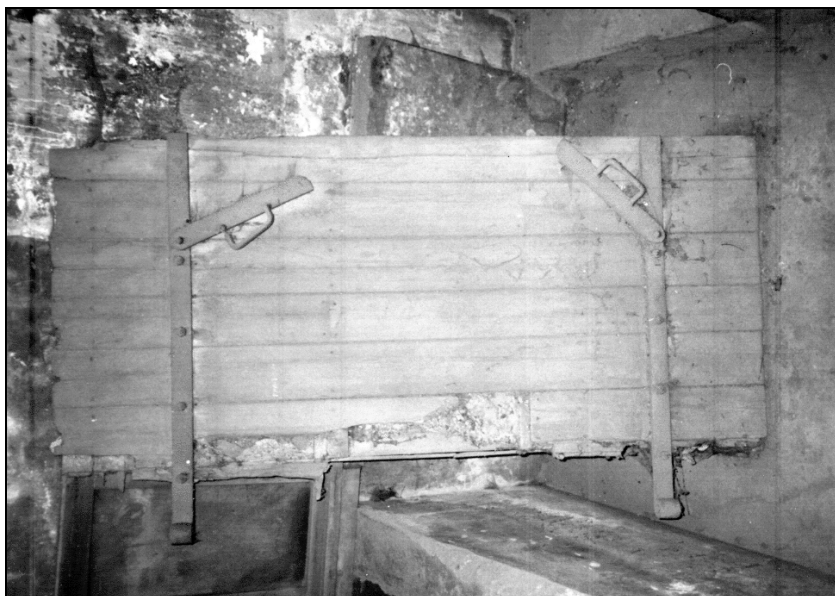
Document 30: Auschwitz, old crematorium, gas-tight door of the air-raid shelter (rear entry); at the right: wooden door of the vestibule. © Fredrick Töben 1997



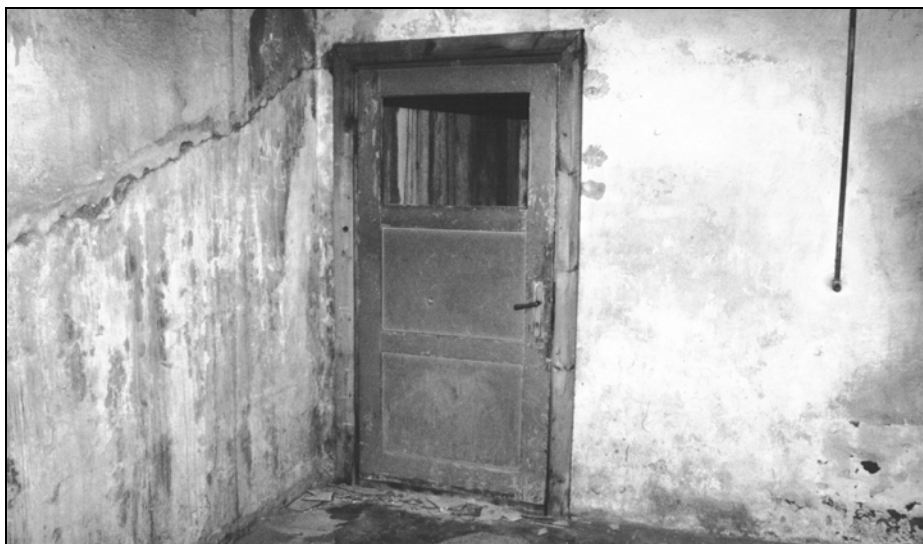
Document 31: Auschwitz, old crematorium, probably the gas-tight door temporarily separating the air-raid shelter from the former oven room, in 1991 stored in the oven room. © Carlo Mattogno 1991



Document 32: Gas-tight wooden door found in the vicinity of crematorium V at Birkenau. Polish photo of April-May 1945. APMO, microfilm no. 12683.



Document 33: Gas-tight wooden door found in 1945 in the vicinity of crematorium V at Birkenau and preserved at the old crematorium at Auschwitz. (See document 32).



Document 34: Auschwitz, old crematorium, door with glass window separating today's "gas chamber," but originally the former washing room, from the former laying-out/surgery room. © Fredrick Töben 1997



Document 35: Auschwitz, old crematorium, toilet drains of former air-raid shelter, now located in what is claimed to have been a "gas chamber." © Fredrick Töben 1997

Abbreviations

- AGK Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi
Polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (Archive of the Central
Commission of Inquiry into the Crimes against the Polish People –
National Memorial), Warsaw
- APMM Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku (Archive of State
Museum at Majdanek)
- APMO Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Archive of
the State Museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau)
- BAK Bundesarchiv Koblenz
- GARF Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the
Russian Federation), Moscow
- PRO Public Record Office, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, Great Britain
- RGVA Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv (Russian State War Ar-
chive), Moscow
- ZStL Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen, Ludwigsburg

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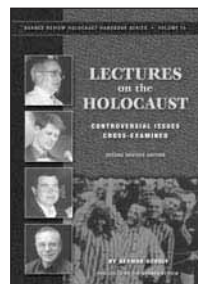
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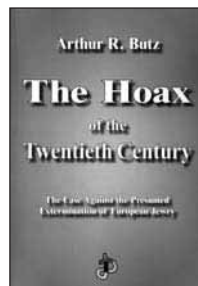
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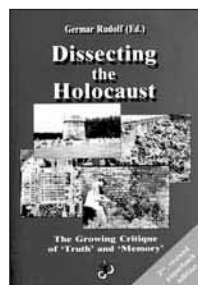
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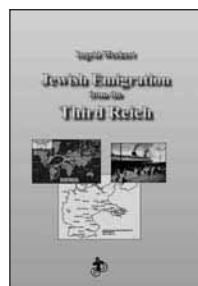
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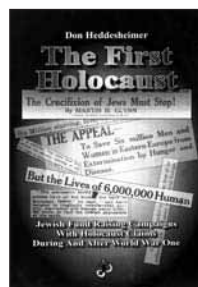


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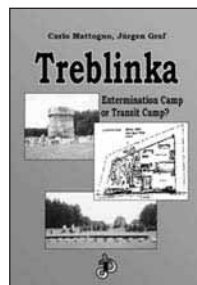


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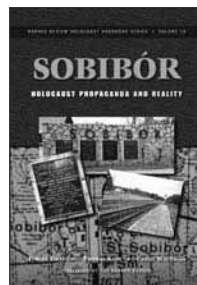
this allegation was spread by sources like *The New York Times*—but the year was 1919! Don Heddesheimer’s compact but substantive *First Holocaust* documents post-WWI propaganda that claimed East European Jewry was on the brink of annihilation (regularly invoking the talismanic six million figure). It details how that propaganda was used to agitate for minority rights for Jews in Poland, and for Bolshevism in Russia. It demonstrates how Jewish fundraising operations in America raised vast sums in the name of feeding suffering Polish and Russian Jews, then funneled much of the money to Zionist and Communist “constructive undertakings.” *The First Holocaust* is a valuable study of American Jewish institutional operations at a fateful juncture in Jewish and European history; an incisive examination of a cunningly contrived campaign of atrocity and extermination propaganda two decades before the alleged WWII Holocaust—and an indispensable addition to every revisionist’s library. Softcover, 144 pages, B&W illustrations, bibliography, index, #386, \$10 minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



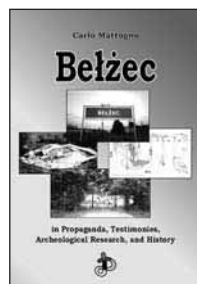
Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp? By Carlo Mattogno and Juergen Graf. It is alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were said to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, fast-acting or slow-acting poison gas, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, diesel exhaust fumes etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multi-storied buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel at all. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka's true identity: it was a transit camp. Even longtime revisionism buffs will find a lot that is new in this book, while Graf's animated style guarantees a pleasant reading experience. The original testimony of witnesses enlivens the reader, as does the skill with which the authors expose the absurdities of Holocaust historiography. Softcover, 365 pages, B&W illustrations, bibliography, index, #389, \$25 minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



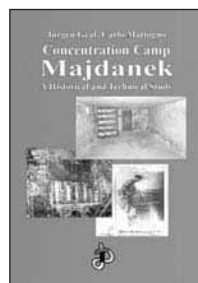
Sobibor. Holocaust Propaganda and Reality. By Juergen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. Between 25,000 and 2,000,000 Jews are said to have been killed in gas chambers in the Sobibór camp in eastern Poland in 1942 and 1943. The corpses were allegedly buried in mass graves and later incinerated on pyres. This book investigates these claims and shows that they are not based on solid evidence, but on the selective use of absurd and contradictory eyewitness testimonies. Archeological surveys of the camp in 2000-2001 are analyzed, with fatal results for the extermination camp hypothesis. The book also thoroughly documents the general NS policy toward Jews, which never included an extermination plan. Softcover, 434 pages, B&W illustrations, bibliography, index. #536, \$25 minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



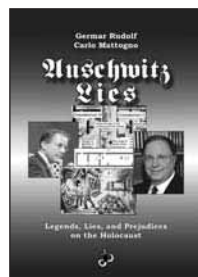
Belzec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History. By Carlo Mattogno. Witnesses report that at least 600,000, if not as many as three million, Jews were murdered in the Belzec camp, located in eastern Poland, between 1941 and 1942. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: diesel gas chambers; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers etc. According to witnesses, the corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving any traces. For those who know the stories about Treblinka this all sounds too familiar. The author therefore restricted this study to the aspects which are different and new compared to Treblinka, but otherwise refers the reader to his Treblinka book. The development of the official image portrait about Belzec is explained and subjected to a thorough critique. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed in the late 1990s in Belzec, the results of which are explained and critically reviewed. These findings, together with the absurd claims by "witnesses," refute the thesis of an extermination camp. Softcover, 138 pages, B&W illustrations, bibliography, index, #540, \$15 minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



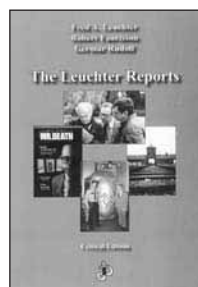
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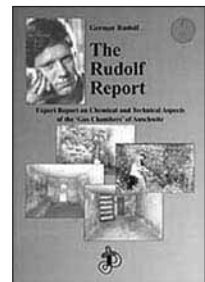
The Giant with Feet of Clay: Raul Hilberg and His Standard Work on the "Holocaust."

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The Rudolf Report. Expert Report on Chemical and Technical Aspects of the 'Gas Chambers' of Auschwitz.

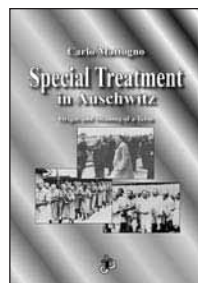
By Germar Rudolf. In 1988, Fred Leuchter, American expert for execution technologies, investigated the alleged gas chambers of Auschwitz and Majdanek and concluded that they could not have functioned as claimed. Ever since, Leuchter's claims have been massively criticized. In 1993, Rudolf, a researcher from the prestigious German Max Planck Institute, published a thorough forensic study about the alleged gas chambers of Auschwitz that irons out the deficiencies and discrepancies of "The Leuchter Report." *The Rudolf Report* is the first English edition of this sensational scientific work. It analyzes all existing evidence on the Auschwitz gas chambers. The conclusions are quite clear: The alleged gas chambers of Auschwitz could not have existed. In the appendix, Rudolf describes his unique persecution. Softcover, 455 pages, B&W & color illustrations, bibliography, index, #378, \$33 minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



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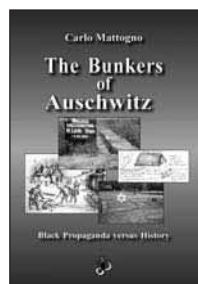
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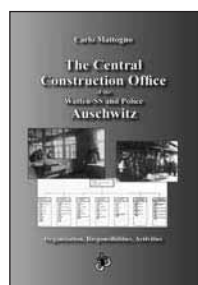
The Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda vs. History.

By Carlo Mattogno. The so-called “Bunkers” at Auschwitz are claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz specifically equipped for this purpose in early 1942. With the help of original German wartime files, this study shows that these “bunkers” never existed; how the rumors about them evolved as black propaganda created by resistance groups within the camp; how this propaganda was transformed into “reality” by historians; and how material evidence (aerial photography and archeological research) confirms the publicity character of these rumors. Softcover, 264 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index, #544, \$20 minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



Auschwitz: The Central Construction Office.

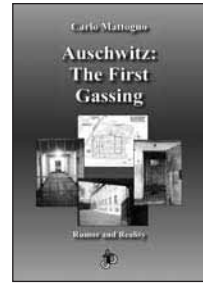
By Carlo Mattogno. Based upon mostly unpublished German wartime documents from Moscow archives, this study describes the history, organization, tasks and procedures of the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Auschwitz Police. Despite a huge public interest in the camp, next to nothing was really known about this office, which was responsible for the planning and construction of the Auschwitz camp complex, including those buildings in which horrendous mass slaughter is erroneously said to have occurred. Softcover, 182 pages, B&W illustrations, glossary, #545, \$18 minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



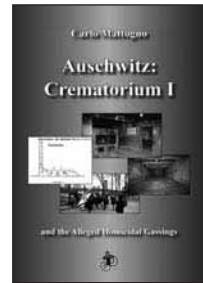
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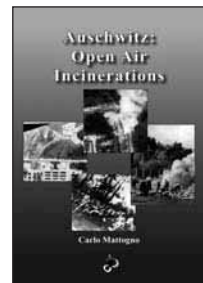
Auschwitz: The First Gassing—Rumor and Reality. By Carlo Mattogno. The first gassing of human beings in Auschwitz is claimed to have occurred on Sept. 3, 1941, in a basement room. The accounts reporting it are the archetypes for all later gassing accounts. This study analyzes all available sources about this alleged event. It shows that these sources contradict each other in location, date, preparations, victims etc, rendering it impossible to extract a consistent story. Original wartime documents inflict a final blow to the tale of the first homicidal gassing. Softcover, 157 pages, B&W illustrations, bibliography, index, #515, **\$16** minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



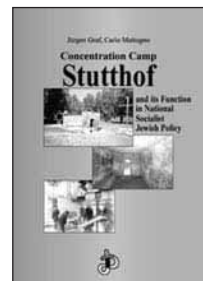
Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings. By Carlo Mattogno. The morgue of Crematorium I in Auschwitz is claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chamber in that camp. This study thoroughly investigates all accessible statements by witnesses and analyzes hundreds of wartime documents in order to accurately write a history of that building. Mattogno proves that its morgue was never used as a homicidal gas chamber, nor could it have served as such. Softcover, 138 pages, B&W illustrations, bibliography, index, #546, **\$18** minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations. By Carlo Mattogno. Hundreds of thousands of corpses of murder victims are claimed to have been incinerated in deep ditches in the Auschwitz concentration/work camp complex. This book examines the many testimonies regarding these incinerations and establishes whether these claims were technically possible. Using aerial photographic evidence, physical evidence and wartime documents, the author shows that these claims are untrue. A must read. Softcover, 132 pages, B&W illustrations, bibliography, index, #547, **\$12** minus 10% for TBR subscribers.



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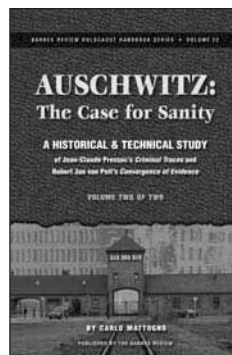
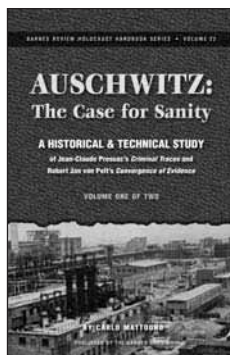


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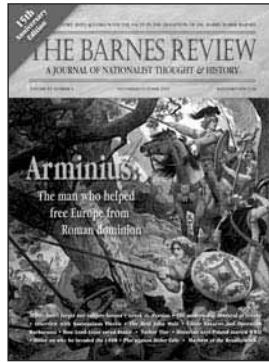
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